Daily Report

Latin America

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Wednesday
26 December 1990

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CONTENTS

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Weekly Roundup of Regional Drug Seizures *[Bogota TV, etc.]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

ANPP To Review Constitutional Reforms *[Madrid EFE]* 2
Attorney General Justifies Crackdown on Crime *[Havana Radio]* 2
Provincial Court Tries Rum Factory Embezzlers *[Havana TV]* 2
Castro Diaz-Balart Ends Argentine Visit *[Havana TV]* 3

Antigua and Barbuda

Bird Announces 'Concessionary Loan' From PRC *[CANA]* 3

Haiti

Aristide Officially Declared President by CEP *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 3
Issues First Statement *[Hamburg DPA]* 3
Bazin's ANDP Acknowledges Aristide Victory *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 4
Communist Party Leader Congratulates Aristide *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 4

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

IMF Said To Praise Economic Management *[CANA]* 4

Trinidad and Tobago

Robinson Institutes Another Cabinet Reshuffle *[CANA]* 4

MEXICO

Foreign Secretariat Communique Hits Iraq *[NOTIMEX]* 6
Government 'Pleased' With El Salvador Truce *[San Salvador Radio]* 6

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

Weekly Roundup of Combat Activity *[Radio Venceremos, etc.]* 7

Guatemala

Reaction to Suspension of U.S. Military Aid 7
Defense Minister Interviewed *[Guatemala City TV]* 7

President Cerezo Comments on Cut *[PRENSA LIBRE 24 Dec]* 8
Rivera Irias Comments on Belize's Joining OAS *[PRENSA LIBRE 20 Dec]* 8

Honduras

Foreign Minister Cites Obstacles to Refugee Flow *[EL HERALDO 20 Dec]* 9
Security Spokesman Comments on Bombing Suspects *[Tegucigalpa Radio]* 9

Nicaragua

TELCOR Minister Vigil Comments on Strike *[Managua Radio]* 10
Radio Frequencies Department Reorganized *[Managua Radio]* 10
Radio La Primerisima Resumes Broadcasting *[Managua TV]* 11
Finance Minister Announces Economic Measures *[Managua Radio]* 11
Central Bank Authorizes Currency Devaluation *[Managua Radio]* 11

Panama

Brother of Eduardo Herrera Arrested 22 Dec *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 23 Dec]* 12
Escapes From PTJ 23 Dec *[LA PRENSA 24 Dec]* 12
Some of Policemen Linked to Rebellion Released *[EL PANAMA AMERICA 25 Dec]* 13
Developments in Labor Dispute With Government 13
Workers Confederation Communique *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 16 Dec]* 13
Archbishop McGrath To Mediate *[EL PANAMA AMERICA 18 Dec]* 14
Rodriguez Continues Hunger Strike *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 21 Dec]* 14
Unionists Call Off March *[Panama City TV]* 15
Rodriguez Ends Hunger Strike *[CRITICA LIBRE 25 Dec]* 15
New Independent Labor Organization Founded *[LA PRENSA 21 Dec]* 15
University Issues Statement on Recent Events *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 20 Dec]* 16
Civic Crusade Affirms Need for National Dialogue *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 20 Dec]* 17
Parties Comments on U.S. 'Invasion,' 'Attack' 17
Democratic Revolutionary Party *[EL PERIODICO 19 Dec]* 17
People's Party Communique *[EL PERIODICO 19 Dec]* 19
Authorities Capture Drug Kingpin in Curundu *[Panama City TV]* 19
Deputy Minister on Increase in Fuel Prices *[LA PRENSA 24 Dec]* 20

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Castro Diaz-Balart Arrives for Visit 21
Discusses Nuclear Issues *[DYN]* 21
Views Shevardnadze Resignation *[TELAM]* 21
Urges Nuclear Energy Exchange *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 21
Army Chiefs Name New Commanders *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 22
Army To Discharge Over 700 Officers, NCO's *[Madrid EFE]* 22
Government Reportedly Orders Mutiny Charges *[BUENOS AIRES HERALD 24 Dec]* 23
Coast Guard Cashiers, Jails NCO's, Troops *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 23
President Menem Returns From Antarctic *[TELAM]* 24

Brazil

German Satellite Discovered off Paraiba State *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 23 Dec]* 24
Second Stage of Satellite Launcher Tested *[O GLOBO 22 Dec]* 24
Ultracentrifuges To Raise Uranium Production *[O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO 18 Dec]* 24
Ultracentrifuges Detailed *[O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO 18 Dec]* 25

Chile

Aylwin, Pinochet Attend Military Ceremony *[LA TERCERA DE LA HORA 21 Dec]* 26
Aylwin Notes 'Full Support' for Defense Minister *[Santiago TV]* 26

Aylwin Assesses Incident With Army *[Santiago Radio]* 26
Correa Says Pinochet Resignation Never Requested *[Santiago Radio]* 27
Aylwin Forms National Narcotics Control Council *[Santiago Radio]* 27
La Cutufa Judge Rejects Pinochet Claims on Case *[Madrid EFE]* 27
Communist Party Registered in 12 Regions *[Santiago Radio]* 28

Colombia

FARC, ELN Express Willingness for Dialogue *[AFP]* 28
Government Decrees Higher Minimum Wage *[Bogota Radio]* 28
Minister Visits Vatican, Signs Agreements *[Bogota TV]* 28

Ecuador

Government Defends Meeting With PLO *[AFP]* 29
New President of Indian Confederation Elected *[AFP]* 29

Paraguay

Rodriguez Praises Military Support for Democracy *[ULTIMA HORA 24 Dec]* 30
Rodriguez Delivers Christmas Message *[HOY 25 Dec]* 30
Industry Under Secretary on Inflation, Growth *[HOY 22 Dec]* 32
Soviet Official Urges Educational Exchange *[HOY 21 Dec]* 32
German Asks for More Investment Protection *[ABC COLOR 21 Dec]* 32

Peru

Fujimori Assails Congress, Issues Union Decree *[Lima TV]* 33
Shining Path Raid; Security in Lima Noted *[Madrid EFE]* 33
Air Force, Army To Set Up Dragnet in Huallaga *[Lima TV]* 34
Speculation, Hoarding Prompts Free Rice Imports *[Lima TV]* 34
Decrees on Purchase of Local Goods Promulgated *[Lima Radio]* 34
Social Security Workers Accept Offers To Resign *[Lima TV]* 35

Uruguay

Lacalle To Meet Southern Cone Presidents *[Madrid EFE]* 35
Central Bank Announces Foreign Debt Repurchase *[Madrid EFE]* 35
PCU Communique on Gulf, Panama Invasion *[LA HORA POPULAR 12 Dec]* 35

Venezuela

Looting Forces Early End to Legislative Sessions *[Madrid EFE]* 36
President To Visit Central America, Haiti *[AFP]* 36

Guyana

Hoyte Announces Overhaul of Tax System *[CANA]* 36
Privatization Drive Continues *[CANA]* 37

Suriname

Chronology of Suriname Coup Reportage 37
Bouterse Said To Resign *[AFP]* 37
Bouterse Resigns 23 Dec *[CANA]* 37
Soldiers 'Doing Their Duty' *[AFP]* 38
Rumors of 'Alleged' Coup *[Hamburg DPA]* 38
Emergency Cabinet Session Called *[Hilversum Radio]* 38
Soldiers Occupy TV Station *[Madrid EFE]* 39
Reason for Coup Given *[Hilversum Radio]* 39
Coup Leaders To Call Elections *[AFP]* 39

Bouterse 'Undoubtedly' Behind Coup *[Hilversum Radio]* 39
Netherlands Suspends Aid *[Havana Radio]* 40
Paramaribo Radio Reports Coup *[Paramaribo Radio]* 40
Paramaribo Reported 'Calm' *[Paramaribo Radio]* 40
Telephone Connections 'Closed' *[Paramaribo Radio]* 41
Military Spokesman on Coup *[Hilversum Radio]* 41
Dutch Condemn Coup *[Hilversum Radio]* 41
New Leader on Events *[Hamburg DPA]* 42
New Leader Rules Out Curfew *[AFP]* 42

Weekly Roundup of Regional Drug Seizures

PA2412220890

[Editorial Report] Following is a compilation of reports on drug seizures and arrests related to drug trafficking in bureau coverage area from 8 to 22 December. Source follows in parentheses after each item.

Colombia

Police in Guame Tolima, have reported seizing a small Peruvian plane carrying 96 kg of cocaine hidden in the engine. While the pilot claims that he flew the plane under duress, officials maintain that he is a member of an international drug network. (Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 8 Dec 90)

The authorities have confiscated 53 kg of cocaine in San Andres in the past 24 hours: 50 kg was found at the Sesquicentenario Airport in a shipment from Medellin, and an additional three kg was found on two men who were arrested on a street. (Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 15 Dec 90 p 12a)

Honduras

Guanaja, La Bahia Islands—The Public Security Force confiscated approximately eight kg of cocaine valued at 1.728 million lempiras during an operation which led to the arrest of Sanlee Dixon Cristian, 51. Dixon claimed to have found the drug on the "high seas." (Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 21 Dec 90 p 2)

Mexico

Los Mochis, Sinaloa, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The authorities reported today that 38 kg of pure cocaine and $10,000 in cash was confiscated from a twin-engine plane that crashed on the Santa Blanca farm, 16 km north of Los Mochis. It is believed that the plane, with Mexican Registration No. XM-OTZ, was on its way from Colombia to the United States and had already unloaded most of the cargo from the craft which has the capacity to carry about 600 kg of cocaine. (Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0246 GMT 18 Dec 90)

Mexico City, 19 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Federal Judicial Police have seized a shipment of 1,627 kg of marijuana in Nuevo Leon from a truck that was on its way to southern Texas. Three people were arrested in connection with this shipment: Abel Alvarez Nava, who drove the truck, and accomplices Jose Alfredo Escobar Estrella and Raul Lozano Lopez, who had been hired in McCallen, Texas, to receive the shipment. (Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2009 GMT 19 Dec 90)

Mexico City, 23 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Office of the Attorney General has officially reported that during the present administration, over 31 tonnes of marijuana, 32 kg of marijuana seeds, five kg of opium gum, 336 weapons, and 126 vehicles were seized in Michoacan State. The report adds that 608 people linked to drug trafficking have been arrested, 500 counterfeit American dollars have been seized, and 32 hectares planted with poppy and 954 hectares planted with marijuana have been destroyed by the Federal Judicial Police. The Directorate of the Campaign Against Narcotics Production destroyed another 1,331 marijuana plots with a total area of approximately 1,623,200 square meters. Moreover, this weekend, drug agents burned over three tonnes of marijuana in Jacona and Uruapan, Michoacan. (Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1937 GMT 23 Dec 90)

Panama

On 14 December, authorities in Bocas del Toro confiscated four kg of cocaine, worth 128,000 balboas on the international market, from Joaquin Bennet and Samuel Pomares, both of Colon. The two were arrested and taken to Panama City. (Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish 16 Dec 90 pp 48, 27)

The Judicial Technical Police have dismantled a drug network affiliated with the Cali Cartel that was operating out of Panama and Costa Rica to funnel drugs to Europe. Three Colombians who were not identified and Zuleika Williams, a Panamanian, were arrested in the police operation. The police seized 28 kg of cocaine, worth $3 million on the black market, which was to be sent to the Netherlands. The head of the drug ring is allegedly a Colombian who is being sought by the police. (Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 18 Dec 90 p 6)

Inspector Renato Famiglietti, deputy director of the Judicial Technical Police, has reported that during 1990, his organization seized 3,052 kg of pure cocaine, 40 kg of basuco, and 80 kg of marijuana, valued at over $80 million on the international market. He added that 761 people were arrested on drug-related charges, with the following breakdown: 684 Panamanians, 83 Colombians, five Costa Ricans, one Puerto Rican, three Haitians, 11 U.S. citizens, 2 Jamaicans, one British citizen, one Uruguayan, two Argentines, one Dominican, one Mexican, one Nicaraguan, and one Cuban (numbers as received). (Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 20 Dec 90 p 8a)

Cuba

ANPP To Review Constitutional Reforms

PA2512212390 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1930 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Havana, 25 Dec (EFE)—Juan Escalona, president of the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], announced today that the ANPP (the Cuban parliament) will create a committee to study the constitutional reforms approved in 1976.

Escalona, who is also a member of the Central Committee of the ruling Communist Party of Cuba [PCC], explained that the committee, which will be formed in January, will include deputies and lawyers who will present proposals and recommendations that concern possible changes to the structure and operations of the ANPP.

The changes to be studied include reforms of the executive committee and the provincial and municipal assemblies, the method in which deputies and people's delegates are elected, and the length of the terms of office.

The seventh regular ANPP session will begin on 26 December at the Havana Convention Center and will last three days. It will be broadcast live by local radio and television stations.

The newspaper GRANMA, the official PCC publication, reported today that the 16 plenary committees of the ANPP met on 24 December to prepare for the new session.

The committees for constitutional and legal affairs, overall economic activities, foreign affairs, education, science and sports, industry, transportation and communication, labor and social security, and construction and housing met on 24 December.

Attorney General Ramon de la Cruz attended the constitutional and legal affairs committee meeting and gave a report on crime in Cuba during 1990.

De la Cruz reported the results of the Interior Ministry's recent police operation in which 500 people were arrested on charges of embezzling from the government and other economic crimes.

Supreme Court President Raul Amaro Salup referred to the reforms in municipal courts' implementation of justice—they will be authorized to issue provisional arrest warrants—and to the fact that illegal economic activities are now considered malicious crimes.

On 26 and 27 December, the parliamentarians are going to study the report that is to be presented by the Council of Ministers concerning the National Food Program. This program is intended to guarantee self-sufficiency in supplying food now that Cuba suffers from an almost complete lack of imports.

The last day of the sessions, 28 December, the parliamentarians will work toward ratifying the State Council's legal decrees and will study the operations of the municipal People's Power organizations.

Cuban President Fidel Castro will give the closing speech at the last session and his words are being awaited by many with great expectation.

Attorney General Justifies Crackdown on Crime

FL2612124490 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1725 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Attorney General Ramon de la Cruz Ochoa has stated that experience shows the authorities' ability to strictly restrain—through the enforcement of laws—all criminal activities in our country. De la Cruz submitted a report on the criminal situation in 1990 when he attended the plenary meeting of the parliamentary constitutional and judicial affairs committee.

The attorney general said the current crackdown on crime is not a purely situational matter or a one- or two-month-long campaign, but dictated by the historic times the revolution is experiencing. De la Cruz Ochoa stressed that corruption, economic crimes, impunity, speculation, and the underground economy need to be fought without rest, especially during this special period. He explained that there will be no trial marathons against criminals but that each one is being discussed and investigated carefully and in detail.

Provincial Court Tries Rum Factory Embezzlers

FL2512151590 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Taking advantage of the existing lack of control and the positions they held, defendants Margarita Ferret Quintana, head accountant of the Luis Sillas Factory; Gustavo Pupo Cruz, chief of the Guantanamo beverages and liquor enterprise warehouse; and Bevino Blanco Vega and Clemente Feliciano Murgado, gastronomic unit administrators, forged or tampered with the necessary documents to divert and illegally sell large amounts of rum with the help of three distributors of the aforementioned enterprise.

In this way, these citizens took over 170,000 pesos worth of state goods, which is equivalent to almost 20 percent of the aforementioned rum factory's production in the first half of last year. This was confirmed during a fiscal audit conducted in that industry.

As accessory measures, the Guantanamo Provincial People's Tribunal ordered the seizure of the houses, automobiles, and other goods obtained by the defendants as a result of their criminal activity as well as their inability to assume any leadership post in state administrative-political activities, economic units, political, or mass organizations.

Castro Diaz-Balart Ends Argentine Visit

FL2512145290 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, executive secretary of the Cuban Atomic Energy Commission, has ended his visit to southern Argentina at the Bariloche Atomic Center. The Cuban official visited the institution at the invitation of the Argentine authorities as part of a bilateral cooperation program. This is the first time that a high-level Cuban scientific delegation toured all the installations of the above-mentioned institution, which is considered to be the largest in Latin America, and the Balseiro Institute, one of the most important atomic energy institutes in Argentina. During his talks with Argentine officials, Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart examined new cooperation possibilities between the two sides.

Antigua and Barbuda

Bird Announces 'Concessionary Loan' From PRC

FL2412150890 Bridgetown CANA in English 1737 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] St John's, Antigua, Dec 23, CANA—The People's Republic of China is lending Antigua and Barbuda approximately EC64 million dollars (one EC dollar; 37 cents US) over the next two years, Deputy Prime Minister Lester Bird said.

Bird said the concessionary loan—the terms were not disclosed—would be "utilized between now and December 1993". He did not say how government proposed using the money.

Bird said Antigua and Barbuda also was "extremely happy for the financial assistance which (China)...has committed towards the construction of a multi-purpose exhibition centre in downtown St John's."

The Beijing government and Antigua and Barbuda signed a protocol in 1983, providing for Chinese economic and technical assistance.

Under that agreement, China recently financed and provided labour for the construction of a EC2.7 million dollar bridge here.

Bird said Antigua and Barbuda also looked forward to receiving Chinese arts and crafts valued at EC2.8 million dollars for a trial sale here.

Haiti

Aristide Officially Declared President by CEP

FL2412165590 Port-au-Prince Radio Antilles Internationale in French 1245 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Excerpt] It is official. Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide will be the 40th president of Haiti. After several days of vote counting, the members of the Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] have officially proclaimed the results of the presidential elections.

This news was received with joy by tens of thousands in Port-au-Prince who immediately swarmed into the streets of the capital shouting: "Go Aristide"! The crowd massed in the main roads of the capital.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide visited the popular quarters of Port-au-Prince, the places where most of his partisans live. He was escorted by army cars. In his first statements, the new president called upon all sectors of Haitian society for unity in fighting the extreme poverty. Aristide thanked the diplomatic corps and the international community for their contributions to the success of the 16 December elections. He also thanked the Haitian Army. Vote counting is going on for the parliamentary and senatorial candidates and Father Aristide's National Front for Change and Democracy might get very favorable results, according to the preliminary results. [passage omitted]

Issues First Statement

PA2412194090 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1623 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 24 Dec (DPA)—In his first public statement after last week's elections, Catholic priest Jean Bertrand Aristide, Haitian president-elect, has promised to make changes in the country and has stated that he will head a government that will not undertake revenge or purges.

Aristide addressed the country in the afternoon of 23 December after the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) confirmed his election as the new Haitian president in the first free elections held in Haiti. As the nationwide vote count continues, the representative of the National Front for Change and Democracy [FNCD] continues to lead with approximately 60 percent of the votes.

Aristide's election victory was confirmed after 50.1 percent of the total votes had been counted and the official results had been released. According to the CEP figures, Aristide obtained approximately 820,497 votes, which represent 67.7 percent of the votes counted. Meanwhile, Marc Bazin, his closest opponent, accumulated 189,481 votes, which represent almost 15 percent of the votes counted.

During a television address, Aristide said: "My government will help things change in Haiti." He added: "My government will work to lower the cost of living and to create new jobs. It will promote a stable atmosphere for production and it will protect investors' interests.

The Haitian president-elect thanked Haitians for their support, stressing that the Haitian people "were brave" when they voted for him and the FNCD and against Bazin. It had been said that Bazin was supported by the United States. Aristide told his opponents and the Army that there will be neither persecution nor purges.

The final results of the parliamentary elections are still unknown, so it has been impossible to determine who will have a parliamentary majority and therefore the right to become the country's prime minister, as established by the Constitution.

The second round of elections for the parliament candidates who did not obtain the required absolute majority will be held on 20 January. Local political circles have asserted that Aristide will not have any problems in forming a parliamentary bloc.

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 1655 GMT on 24 December in a similar report by Michel Lamisere adds: "After having been confirmed as Haitian president-elect, Father Jean Bertrand Aristide urged his political opponents to work together for the reconstruction of Haiti, which is considered the poorest country in the continent.

["After the Provisional Electoral Council proclaimed him as the new Haitian president on 23 December, Aristide, 37, said that we all have to rebuild the country by respecting each other and by having the participation of all political parties, as the constitution demands.

["Aristide added that the Haitian people have made a sacrifice to show the country's true face to the world.

["The new Haitian president-elect urged his followers not to give in to feelings of revenge, and he asked the soldiers to offer a garden of safety and security to the Haitian people.

["Similarly, Aristided told the Haitians who live abroad that it is time to come back home."]

Bazin's ANDP Acknowledges Aristide Victory

FL2412171290 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 24 Dec 90

[National Alliance for Democracy and Progress (ANDP) media statement dated 23 December 1990—read by announcer]

[Text] In a press release, the ANDP expresses its position on the elections. With the holding of the 16 December 1990 elections an important step was taken in the normalization of national life. The holding of these open elections has served the cause of democracy and has brought respect to the three ANDP parties, which struggled steadfastly and made many sacrifices in order to hold these elections. Many irregularities tainted the ballots, not only in the metropolitan area, but also in the provinces. We accept as definitive, however, the voting results issued by the CEP in its 21 December press conference.

We therefore congratulate the elected candidates and especially Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who will soon have the heavy responsibility, along with his government, of taking our country out of the serious crisis, and guiding it toward a better future.

We also warmly congratulate the Haitian Army which ensured, to the end, the safety of the elections, and we want to greatly thank the international community for the constant support that has given our newly born democracy.

Communist Party Leader Congratulates Aristide

FL2412172090 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Mr. Rene Theodore, the secretary general of the Unified Party of Haitian Communists [PUCH], who was also a presidential candidate, was the first person to offer congratulations to Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide yesterday, Sunday [23 December], after the official announcement of the election of the new president.

Father Aristide has won a great victory. He deserves that. This victory is the result of a great effort. This is what Rene Theodore said after he heard the news.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

IMF Said To Praise Economic Management

FL2612150790 Bridgetown CANA in English 1344 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Kingstown, St. Vincent, Dec. 25, CANA—The end of this year will see St. Vincent and the Grenadines graduating from an eighteen-month consultation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the two-year cycle, Prime Minister James Mitchell has said here.

The prime minister, in his Christmas Day message, said the IMF had expressed satisfaction with the management of the country's economy, at its latest session held on November 19.

"All directors commended the authorities on the prudent fiscal management over the past several years, and noted the overall good performance of the economy with high rates of growth and balance of payment surpluses" the prime minister said of the meeting. He said this improved status began after his New Democratic Party (NDP) administration came to office in 1984, at which time the country received annual consultations.

The IMF reviews the economic performance of member countries on a six-month, one-year, eighteen-month, two-year, or three-year cycle, depending on the strength of the economy.

Trinidad and Tobago

Robinson Institutes Another Cabinet Reshuffle

FL2412173890 Bridgetown CANA in English 1454 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Report by Linda Hutchinson]

[Text] Port of Spain, Trinidad, Dec 23, CANA—Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson reshuffled his cabinet for the second time in three months on Saturday night, removing Selwyn Richardson from the Ministry of National Security to the Ministry of Health.

The reshuffle followed a by-election defeat for the ruling National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) last Monday, in which former Health Minister CLive pantin failed in his second bid to win election to the House of Representatives.

Pantin, who had resigned both from cabinet and the Senate to contest the by-election in the west Trinidad constituency of Diego Martin Central, announced he was quitting active politics after the by-election results gave victory to the candidate of the minority Opposition People's National Movement (PNM).

Replacing Richardson as national security minister is Joseph Toney, who was junior minister to Richardson.

The new appointments are effective January 1, 1991.

Eden Shand, junior minister in the Ministry of External Affairs, was transferred to a similiar position in the Ministry of Health. He will take over from Ken Butcher, who had called for Robinson's resignation as NAR leader and announced he would step down at year-end after Robinson was re-elected unopposed as NAR leader at a recent party convention.

Filling the Senate seat vacated by Pantin will be Attorney-at-lawHorace Broomes, who was named minister in the office of the prime minister with responsibility got for the public service, and the division of information and telecommunications.

Broomes is a former diplomat who served in many countries including India and the United States.

Robinson, in a government statement, also announced that John Andrews, the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Finance, had been transferred to the prime minister's office and had been appointed the new head of the Civil Service.

Andrews succeeds Reginald Dumas who recently retired.

Opposition leader Basdeo Panday said the removal of Richardson, who was heavily criticised in the aftermath of last July's abortive coup attempt, was an attempt to satisfy the complaints of the population.

"Everybody was complaining about Richardson's performance in that ministry, especially right after the coup attempt (but) Robinson did not want to give in to the population in the last reshuffle and left Richardson where he was," Panday told CANA.

"Now, he has come and moved Richardson to the Ministry of Health to satisfy the complaints when he should have done that before."

Prior to the last cabinet reshuffle in September, Richarson had resigned from cabinet following calls from the public that he should go.

Richardson was blamed for not monitoring the activities of the Jamaat al Muslimeen which was behind the coup attempt.

Panday, a former foreign minister in the Robinson government, said the reshuffle would not have any "major effect" on the politics of the country.

"The writing is on the wall. Robinson is playing out his last card and it doesn't matter whom he put where, the story will be the same," Panday said, pointing to defeat for the government in the forthcoming elections here.

Foreign Secretariat Communique Hits Iraq

PA2512220790 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1949 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Mexico City, 25 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Mexican Government today warned that the Iraqi Government, headed by Saddam Husayn, should pull its troops out of Kuwait and heed the UN Security Council's resolutions.

In a communique released today, the Mexican Foreign Secretariat affirmed that disagreements should be settled peacefully and never through confrontation.

The document, which also summarizes President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's activities in 1990, stresses that it was the president's direct intervention that secured the release of the six Mexicans who were in Iraq when the conflict started. A special diplomatic delegation sent to the conflict area—which began on 2 August—and the aid of friendly governments made possible the repatriation of the Mexicans, the Foreign Secretariat pointed out.

The document added that, in 1990, Mexico expanded its presence in Asia and Africa by establishing relations with Namibia, the Congo, and Sao Tome and Principe and by opening embassies in Morocco and Zimbabwe.

Mexican Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana Morales in February conducted a working tour in Morocco, Mexico's leading commercial partner in Africa, to strengthen ties of friendship and cooperation in the area. In addition, Mexico received the ministers for planning, mines, industry, and state-owned corporations of the Congo, as well as the foreign minister of the Western Sahara.

After South African leader Nelson Mandela was released, the Mexican Government reiterated its desire for the various African communities to reach an agreement and live in peace. Also at the various international forums, Mexico has maintained that the apartheid system should be definitively obliterated from the planet.

As for Asia, the Foreign Secretariat stressed then Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' trip to Mexico, which was the first official visit at this level since 1970.

Finally, the document indicated that, in the bilateral field, trade and joint investment agreements were signed with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait, and oil engineering and electrification agreements were signed with Egypt.

Government 'Pleased' With El Salvador Truce

PA2612163690 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Text] The Mexican Foreign Ministry has reported that the Mexican Government will continue to undertake all endeavors possible to cooperate with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's efforts to establish peace in El Salvador.

In a press communique released in Mexico City, the ministry added that Mexico is pleased with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] announcement regarding a Christmas truce that was established under the terms requested. In conclusion, it noted that the FMLN had been requested, according to instructions given by Mexican President Salinas de Gortari, to consider declaring truce in El Salvador during the holiday season, such as last year.

El Salvador

Weekly Roundup of Combat Activity

PA2512220590

[Editorial report] (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador at 0000 GMT on 15 December reports that on 12-13 December, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) clashed with the Army at Hacienda Vieja, in Chalatenango. The guerrilla report states that there were no confirmed casualties among the "enemy." The station also reports that at noon on 13 December, the FMLN attacked army units in Chapeltique, San Miguel Department, killing two soldiers.

Radio Venceremos at 0000 GMT on 17 December reports that at "dawn" on 17 December, FMLN guerrillas attacked the military social security offices in San Salvador, damaging the structure. The report also mentions the following activities on 17 December: an attack on Tecana Battalion troops, in which the "enemy" reportedly sustained two casualties; occupation of a stretch of the Pan American Highway in Usulutan Department; destruction of two utility poles in the same area; and acts of sabotage against two trucks. The same report adds that on 12 December, the FMLN brought down 12 utility poles in San Vicente Department.

Radio Venceremos reports at 0000 GMT on 18 December that the guerrillas inflicted one casualty on the Army's Atonal Battalion near San Jorge in San Miguel Department.

At 0000 GMT on 19 December, Radio Venceremos reports that in two days of clashes, 17-18 December, in San Miguel Department, the FMLN inflicted 24 casualties on the Army and confiscated four backpacks in an encounter along Chapeltique Road in San Nicolas Canton. The report adds that on 18 December, guerrillas attacked troops in Chapeltique, inflicting 12 casualties on the Army. The report claims that the government troops "fled in disarray."

The station further reports that a soldier was killed on 17 December in clashes in Dulce Nombre de Maria, Chalatenango Department.

At 0000 GMT on 20 December, Radio Venceremos carries a "general summary" of the results of FMLN military operations in Chalatenango between 20 November and 16 December. It says that in five strategic operations during this period, the guerrillas inflicted "hundreds of casualties" on the Army. It says that these casualties include 16 officers. It adds that prisoners were turned over to the Red Cross, two aircraft were shot down, 56 weapons were seized, and the Cerron Grande Dam was sabotaged.

At 1800 GMT on 22 December, Radio Venceremos carries three reports of clashes with government troops. It says that on 21 December, the FMLN ambushed a convoy of four trucks and a jeep belonging to the Atlacatl Battalion, killing two soldiers and wounding nine. It adds that the guerrillas also inflicted 24 casualties on the Bracamonte Battalion, bringing the total number of casualties to 35. Additionally, FMLN urban commandos reportedly dynamited four banks on 21 December to protest the privatization of banking.

From the government side, San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish on 17 December on page 32 cites a report from the Armed Forces Press Committee (COPREFA) which states that an officer and three enlisted men were killed in clashes with the FMLN at La Laguna at noon on 16 December.

San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish on 19 December on page 2 carries a report that cavalry troops dismantled a guerrilla camp in Santa Tecla that was capable of sheltering 150 "subversives." It cites military spokesmen as saying that military personnel had successfully repelled a rebel attack against the town of Guazapa. No date of the attack was given.

San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish at 0400 GMT on 21 December cites COPREFA as saying that six rebels had been killed and 11 soldiers wounded in clashes over the "past few hours." It states that the Aprisa Bank was "sabotaged" and several people were wounded.

The same newscast carries another COPREFA report indicating that bombs thrown by the FMLN at the Agricultural Development and Cuscatlan Banks caused no casualties, but only property damage. The report adds that six guerrillas were killed and seven soldiers were wounded in a clash between rebels and members of the Army's 3d Brigade.

Guatemala

Reaction to Suspension of U.S. Military Aid

Defense Minister Interviewed

PA2412191890 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 0400 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Interview with Defense Minister General Juan Leonel Bolanos Chavez by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—all figures as heard]

[Text] Government and private sectors are evaluating the implications of the suspension of U.S. military aid to Guatemala. The U.S. State Department announced the decision on 21 December. A few hours after the announcement, the Guatemalan Government officially described the measure as "drastic."

Political circles are also analyzing the main reason given by the Bush administration to suspend the aid, which is the continuation of the violation of human rights in Guatemala and the lack of significant progress in investigations to clarify such cases.

The State Department communique specifically referred to the case of Michael Devine, who was murdered in Peten, as an example of the inefficiency in trying to clarify such actions. It also mentioned the murder of 13 residents of Santiago Atitlan as evidence of the seriousness of the violations.

Defense Minister General Juan Leonel Bolanos Chavez evaluated the U.S. Government's decision. Here is his statement:

[Begin recording] [Bolanos] Since 1971, aid has not been significant. Since the current government assumed power, it has been increased, but it has been subject to conditions. Lately, the government has not accepted pressure. Many things can be said about the suspension of aid, but it is really a political decision by the U.S. Government.

[Reporter] Can you explain what you mean by conditions on the aid?

[Bolanos] Not really. It is a political matter; therefore, I cannot comment in that regard. I prefer not to comment on the subject.

[Reporter] How will the suspension of aid affect the military structures?

[Bolanos] Not at all. Last year we were authorized $2.8 million in September. However, in January, when we tried to find out what had been decided, we were told that the initial amount offered in September 1989, which was $9 million, had been reduced to $2.8 or 2.9 million in January. On that occasion, the reasons given were also political, including the case of [the murder of Salvadoran leftist leader] Oqueli.

The aid has suffered many setbacks. However, we believe that this should not affect us. As I said before, out of the $2.8 million we received approximately $1.7 or 1.9 million, because the rest was lost in Washington's government bureaucracy.

[Reporter] How much will not be received, and how was it going to be used? Apparently it was agreed that it would be for nonlethal purposes.

[Bolanos] That is correct. Since 1986 the aid has been for nonlethal material—specifically, spare parts for the Engineering Corps to carry out construction work to help rural communities. For example, right now we were working on a project that begins from the departmental city of Copan in El Quiche. Therefore, the effects will be felt—although not immediately—when the spare parts do not arrive.

[Reporter] It is said that those responsible [for violating human rights] have not been punished because they are members of the Armed Forces. What do you say?

[Bolanos] Regarding what?

[Reporter] For example the case of Atitla, the death of Michael Devine?

[Bolanos] The cases are under investigation. We cannot, however, accept pressure, or do what the U.S. Embassy wants, for example. There are legal procedures that must be followed; investigations must be conducted, and the corresponding court must give its verdict. The legal process cannot be rushed. [end recording]

President Cerezo Comments on Cut

PA2512171590 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 24 Dec 90 p 2

[All figures as published]

[Text] President Vinicio Cerezo has stated that the U.S. military aid to Guatemala has been gradually decreasing. To date, Washington has already approved $1.9 million and if we were to lose this amount it would be very difficult.

The president made these statements in regard to the pressure being exerted by the Ursuline religious order to get the government to investigate the alleged kidnap and rape of one of its members. The defense minister has stated that this crime never occurred.

Cerezo stated that some foreigners want to pressure the government with their whims in the case of the Ursuline nun Diana Marck. He said these foreigners have no concern for Guatemalan law and that their demands are absurd.

The president noted that the military aid given to Guatemala in 1989 was $2 million, which was to be given over a four- to five-year period. This is a very small amount and, at present, we are talking about $1.9 million, Cerezo added.

Rivera Irias Comments on Belize's Joining OAS

PA2412223590 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 20 Dec 90 p6

[Report on news conference given by Guatemalan Foreign Minister Ariel Rivera Irias on 19 December; place not given]

[Text] Foreign Minister Ariel Rivera Irias said during a news conference yesterday that Guatemala cannot legally prevent Belize from joining the OAS, because most countries have recognized Belize as an independent territory.

Foreign Minister Rivera Irias explained that Article No. 8 of the OAS Charter states that any member country that has a conflict with another country that seeks to become a member could enforce its rights and prevent the other country from joning the organization. The OAS Charter was amended during the Cartagena meeting and Article No. 8 became void on 10 December. Subsequently Belize requested membership in the OAS.

Belize is a member of the United Nations because Great Britain decided to grant it its independence, which has not been recognized by Guatemala.

Draft Agreements

Rivera Irias said that Guatemala and Belize have prepared drafts on a primary agreement, so that we can make petitions that will benefit our country, among them, one seeking an outlet to the sea. He said that the presidential candidate who wins the 6 January elections will have to call on the people to decide if Guatemala will accept Belizean independence.

Trip

Rivera Irias indicated that President Cerezo will go to Honduras during the first days of January to receive the Francisco Morazan award. The Honduran Government bestowed this honor on President Cerezo for his achievements in consolidating peace in Central America, and the fulfillment of the Esquipulas II Agreements.

Agreement

He also said that an agreement was signed on 19 December between the association of exporters of nontraditional products and the Foreign Ministry to use the diplomatic service framework abroad. He said that the idea is to use work commissions and to set goals for the diplomatic and consular missions and representatives to international organizations. This will allow a reduction in costs and will create greater efficiency and penetration of international markets.

Honduras

Foreign Minister Cites Obstacles to Refugee Flow

PA2512004390 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 20 Dec 90 p4

[Text] Foreign Minister Mario Carias Zapata announced on 19 December that a new policy will not allow Honduras to accept refugees in the future because of its bad economic situation.

He said that the situation will be dealt with as it evolves, but that we must be prepared for it.

Carias Zapata said that the United Nations, through its commission for refugees and its military observers in the area, should have contingency plans for these cases.

He said that if the war in El Salvador escalates, Honduras will not be able "to again absorb groups (of refugees), as it did over the past decade," because its economic situation will not allow it.

Carias Zapata suggested that, if these situations arise in the future, the United Nations, with the Salvadoran Government's permission, should establish refugee camps inside El Salvador, to resolve the problem.

Honduras Has Many Friends, Not Just the United States

Referring to a statement by U.S. Ambassador Cresencio Arcos that the United States is one of the few friends Honduras has, Carias Zapata said that he does not know the context of the statement.

He said, however, that Honduras has many friends in the international community. He said that Honduran relations with its Central American neighbors—Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela—as well as with South America, Europe, and the Far East are excellent.

He recalled that Central America will join the Democratic and Development Association, a common effort by 24 industrialized countries to find concrete solutions for economic reactivation plans.

According to the foreign minister, this means that Honduras is not isolated.

He said that in the GATT context, the differences between the United States and the EEC and Japan with regard to agricultural trade indirectly affects Third World countries, because, there being no agreement among the industrialized nations, farm products of the underdeveloped countries are unprotected.

The Foreign Minister said that if there is no agreement among the industrialized nations, underdeveloped nations would be forced to negotiate, either within President Bush's Initiative for the Americas, or with the EEC, to sell bananas and coffee, which are the two most important items.

He said that the EEC has placed short-term restrictions on coffee and bananas. Central America asks that its coffee be given the same treatment as was given to the Andean countries with regard to a reduction in import duties. He said that banana exports should be guaranteed under the same or better conditions in 1992.

Security Spokesman Comments on Bombing Suspects

PA2412232990 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Excerpt] According to information made available to our Press Department, Juan Jose Baca Nunez and Marco Tulio Funes Duarte, who reportedly planted explosive devices in several Tegucigalpa supermarkets, will be turned over to the national judicial system today. Lucia Alvarado has filed this report:

[Begin recording] [Alvarado] Public Security Forces spokesman Captain Cesar Augusto Somoza has described the action of the Public Security Forces as a severe blow to the subversive groups and provided other details on the operation:

[Somoza] The Public Security Forces wish to report to all citizens, and especially Tegucigalpa residents, that, as a result of the intense patrols that we have been implementing in the capital and throughout the country,

yesterday we discovered that two subversive criminals—Juan Jose Baca Nunez and Marco Tulio Funes Duarte—had planted two bombs at the Su Casa Supermarket that were to be detonated by midnight. The explosives were found and defused and the aforementioned individuals were taken to a Public Security Forces detention facility.

First Criminal Judge Jesus Martinez Suazo was present and witnessed the entire operation carried out by the Public Security Forces. The aforementioned individuals belong to the Morazanista Patriotic Front. Juan Jose Baca Nunez has been a Front member for the past 10 years and is currently the education secretary of STIB [Union of Beverage Industry Workers] and a member of the Communist Party of Honduras. We want you to know that this front seeks to sink our country into even more profound chaos by indiscriminately planting such explosive devices. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Nicaragua

TELCOR Minister Vigil Comments on Strike

PA2112163490 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0349 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Radio Nicaragua confirmed this morning that many TELCOR [Nicaraguan Telecommunications and Postal Services] workers went to work and that regional and international communications are back to normal. Every person who wanted to return to work was being allowed through the main gate of the Villa Fontana building in Managua.

According to operators of the national and international services, in December the employees will receive their basic Christmas basket and other social benefits, such as transportation, paid travel expenses, overtime, basic grains, medical attention, and eyeglasses, which are not guaranteed in other institutions. One of the leading demands of the TELCOR labor union is compliance with a collective contract that was never fulfilled during the 10 years of Sandinist rule. Despite this, TELCOR Minister-Director Pablo Vigil has expressed willingness to resume negotiations to find a solution to the conflict. Minister Vigil was interviewed this morning and expanded on the situation in Region 4, the measures adopted, and the release of a government communique.

[Begin recording] [Vigil] The problem was caused by the takeover of facilities in Region 4. Because the strikers did not receive the support they expected and could not spread the strike throughout the nation, in desperation they interrupted the vital regional and international communications in Nicaragua yesterday. This takeover, which started approximately at noon, did not succeed because the other TELCOR workers cooperated and the police, very professionally, dislodged the strikers. Consequently, the communications were restored by approximately 1800. The people who had taken over the facilities at Granada, Masaya, Jinotepe, Diriamba, and Rivas were also dislodged this morning. Communications with these areas were restored immediately thereafter.

[Reporter] Do you think the strikers' stand is unreasonable? If so, why?

[Vigil] It is absolutely unreasonable for these workers to take over the facilities and impede the communications of Nicaraguan citizens to support their labor demands. In addition, we were willing to sit down and talk. This is a crime of sabotage against the Nicaraguan people and the citizens' right to communicate, and it is punishable by law. The country should be able to develop and communicate both locally and internationally. Very stiff penalties are meted out everywhere in the world to saboteurs who interrupt communications, which are regarded as essential services.

[Reporter] What kinds of demands are the strikers making? To what extent has the ministry met these demands?

[Vigil] The original demand that started the whole thing was the negotiation of a collective contract, which had been signed before we assumed office in the ministry. There were also some petitions in which they demanded the resignation of some officials. We were willing to sit down and start the negotiations of this list of petitions and this contract. A commission was installed at the Labor Ministry. The takeover occurred the same day that the commission was installed, both in the Radio Frequency Directorate [DIFRERA], where they demanded the removal of Engineer Montiel with no grounds whatsoever, and in Grenada, where they demanded the revision of the contract while they were still in the premises. We always said very clearly that we could not negotiate under blackmail and pressure. Then, they exacerbated matters by disconnecting the communications transmitters linking Central America and fully blocking the Region 4 facilities. They provoked these terrorist actions, which we cannot tolerate at all. The perpetrators are already being tried by the authorities. [end recording]

Radio Frequencies Department Reorganized

PA2512224890 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1130 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Ernesto Robleto, deputy minister of the Nicaraguan Telecommunications and Postal Services [Telcor], has announced that the Department of Radio Frequencies [Difrera] has been eliminated.

Robleto said that in view of recent strikes, Telcor has decided to eliminate that particular department through administrative action:

[Begin Robleto recording] One of the agreements reached was for the demands presented by the unions to be carefully studied. We have begun a process by which a number of commissions have been appointed to study

the various cases. There is nothing to discuss with regard to Difrera. It was eliminated, as an administrative measure. Starting on the first days of January, it will operate according to new regulations. I would say that this case has been resolved. In fact, no proposals were made in that regard during the final negotiations, so there is nothing to negotiate. The unions cannot tell us who should run that institution. Engineer Montiel is still the director and it is possible that the office will be given a different name and will continue to function according to the law. [end recording]

Robleto also referred to the authorization of new radio frequencies, and to investigations with regard to some frequencies granted during the last days of the Sandinist government:

[Begin Robleto recording] As I mentioned in previous interviews, the new frequency law is currently in the hands of the executive branch and will soon be published in the official gazette. Once this new law is published, we will be able to authorize frequencies on a permanent basis. What we have been doing so far is authorizing some temporary frequencies. I understand that the frequency for Radio Flash was one of those temporary authorizations that did not materialize because of the strikes.

Definitely, the assignment of frequencies will be carried out as stipulated. I believe that once and for all we will clarify who is entitled to keep the frequencies assigned by the previous administration—each case will be carefully studied—and who will be authorized new frequencies. [end recording]

Radio La Primerisima Resumes Broadcasting

PA2412172890 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0330 GMT 21 Dec 90

[From the independent newscast "Extravision"]

[Text] Radio station La Primerisima is back on the air today. Radio Station La Primerisima's transmitter plant was the target of a terrorist attack on 30 September, but today, three months later, the station is back on the air, thanks to the solidarity of European and North American countries, Australia, the country's evangelical groups, and labor unions.

[Begin La Primerisima board member and journalist Carlos Lopez recording] We made local and international efforts. Local efforts helped us retain our personnel—who received more assistance than a salary—as we were reopening the station. This also helped us repair the equipment that we needed so that we could be back on the air today.

At the international level, (William Grisby), on behalf of station personnel, secured $120,000 during a tour. This will allow us to have the other 10 KWT-transmitter installed by January to enable us to broadcast on our two frequencies: 570 and 680 kHz. La Primerisima will be on the air today on 680 kHz, and beginning in January on both frequencies. [end recording]

Initially with a power of six kwt on 680 kHz and in January with 10 KWT on 570 kHz, La Primerisima will maintain its news programs and special programs, especially the "Club of Friends" and the "Very First Among the Very First" programs.

Finance Minister Announces Economic Measures

PA2412194790 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Finance Minister Emilio Pereira has confirmed that, effective in January, the central government's payroll will be frozen in order not to increase the nation's general budget. In other words, there will be no wage increases.

Other economic policies for 1991 include not increasing taxes and tax exemptions for street vendors who buy articles in Honduras.

Here is Minister Pereira's statement:

[Begin recording] [Pereira] We have a clear budget. It must be handled with good judgment and precision in order to curb inflation. We will implement a serious plan in the next few days, which will include freezing salaries in order to keep public expenses down. We hope inflation will drop soon and that the economy will stabilize in order to improve the currency situation.

[Reporter] Will there be new taxes next year?

[Pereira] No. In fact, I was just announcing that we are exempting street vendors from paying taxes for products they import from Honduras. We believe that the current tax system is solid and that our fiscal policies are based on growth. We hope to collect more taxes based on the growth of enterprises and not by levying more taxes. [end recording]

Central Bank Authorizes Currency Devaluation

PA2512001090 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] The U.S. dollar today is worth 2.73 million cordobas, according to the official exchange rate authorized by the Central Bank. It represents a devaluation of more than 9 percent this week. It was the highest devaluation in December, and will result in a 10 percent price increase.

This blow was delivered on 24 December as a Christmas gift from the Central Bank, which also ordered the closure of banks to increase speculation on the U.S. dollar.

This additional devaluation means that the Central Bank has been issuing more cordobas without the backing of dollars. In December the Nicaraguan Government generally has more expenses because it must pay Christmas

bonuses. In addition, revenues from mixed taxes decrease because people spend more money on luxuries.

Panama

Brother of Eduardo Herrera Arrested 22 Dec

PA2312184990 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 23 Dec 90 pp A-1, B-2

[Report by Cesar Gomez Marin]

[Text] In a joint operation, the National Police, the Judicial Technical Police, and the Public Prosecutor's Office yesterday afternoon arrested a young soldier, Tomas Herrera. Tomas Herrera is the brother of former Colonel Eduardo Herrera and Officer Francisco Herrera, both of whom are in prison for participating in the 4 and 5 December actions, which are considered to be crimes against the state.

Tomas Herrera, who had been at large since 5 December, when he participated with his brother Eduardo in the uprising at the police headquarters, Curundu neighborhood, and other places, was arrested at his Los Andes neighborhood residence, which is registered under his brother Eduardo's name.

Regarding the arrest of Tomas Herrera, who remained loyal to his brother Eduardo since his escape from Naos Jail, Attorney General Rogelio Cruz said that the questioning of Tomas Herrera could shed new light on the ongoing investigation.

Cruz praised the work and coordination displayed yesterday that led to the arrest of Tomas Herrera, whom he believes could be linked to other violent actions and threats that have been reported in the capital in recent days.

The attorney general underscored the fact that the three Herrera brothers, all members of the defunct Panamanian Defense Forces and later of the National Police, are under arrest and charged with conspiracy to commit crimes and attacks against constitutionally established powers.

Rogelio Cruz told LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA that this could yield positive results for the investigations. He said that Tomas Herrera will be immediately questioned while enjoying all the rights that he is entitled to by law. These three men are important to the investigation. So are Panamanians Olmedo Riggs, who is in exile in Venezuela; Ricardo "Martyrdom" Herrera, who is not a relative of Col. Herrera, but was his trusted associate; and a sergeant surnamed Marciaga. They were all involved in the colonel's "escape" from Naos Jail. They were aboard the helicopter that picked him up.

As for the investigation into the coup attempt against the national government, Attorney General Rogelio Cruz said that it continues. He added that it has produced new leads and identities of people, including civilians and police who participated indirectly or directly in the coup attempt.

"This is not a personal action of Attorney General Rogelio Cruz against Eduardo Herrera. It is an action by the legal state and democracy against the militarism personified by the colonel in a Noriega-less Panama; that is my belief," the attorney general told this newspaper, without complaining about the danger posed by his efforts to fulfill his duties.

Why does Col. Herrera refuse to be interrogated? The attorney general said that Herrera, among other things, has argued that U.S. soldiers were in Naos Jail. He also said that it is unethical to have him interrogated in jail and that he should be interrogated at the Attorney General's Office. Cruz noted the danger posed by any attempt to transfer Col. Herrera to the Attorney General's Office because of a possible attack or actions to demand his release that would seriously incriminate the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Attorney General Rogelio Cruz said that "the rights of a detainee are not violated simply because of the place in which he is interrogated." Cruz pointed out that he has up to four months to complete an indictment and call Eduardo Herrera to trial. There is already very specific and strong incriminating evidence confirming Eduardo Herrera's actions against the state.

Escapes From PTJ 23 Dec

PA2412145190 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 24 Dec 90 p 1

[Report by Elkilia Santos]

[Text] Sublieutenant Tomas Herrera, brother of retired Colonel Eduardo Herrera, who was arrested on 22 December during a raid at a San Miguelito residence, escaped at dawn yesterday from Judicial Technical Police [PTJ] installations.

A PTJ source said the soldier, who was under arrest in PTJ installations, escaped between 0200 or 0300 on 23 December through a bathroom window.

Tomas Herrera, who is a robust man, jumped three meters after removing the panes of his bathroom window, which measures one square foot.

He hugged the installation's walls and got through a 1.5-meter-high fence on the left side of the building, which was apparently unguarded.

Our informant said that Eduardo Herrera's brother is not seriously involved in the 4 and 5 December uprising, but was nevertheless discharged from the Public Force in November.

The PTJ, with the authorization of the Public Prosecutor's Office, has so far raided three residences in an attempt to find Tomas Herrera.

Several embassies have been visited, especially Ecuador's, because the soldier studied in that country, but to no avail. The Ecuadoran Embassy is under police surveillance because former Government and Justice Minister Rodolfo Chiari de Leon is holed up there.

The PTJ source told LA PRENSA that it is possible that Tomas Herrera will be recaptured anytime in view of the way he was arrested on 22 December [as published].

The informant ruled out the possibility that Tomas Herrera was aided by third parties in his escape.

A PTJ policeman who was guarding the door of the room where Tomas Herrera was under arrest said that he heard no noise during his shift.

The authorities learned about the escape when they went to get Herrera to transfer him to the El Renacer jail.

Tomas Herrera was arrested on 22 December at a residence registered under his brother Eduardo Herrera's name in Los Andes No. 2 neighborhood, San Miguelito District.

So far, the authorities have arrested a colonel, a major, seven captains, six lieutenants, and seven sublieutenants for participating in the uprising headed by retired Col. Eduardo Herrera on 4 and 5 December. Four of the soldiers involved in the coup attempt sought asylum at embassies.

The major under arrest is Cesar Cordero, and the captains are Tomas Valdes Betegon, Cerezo, Berry Tin, Luis Donadio, Reynaldo Cedeno, Fidel Oro, and Tomas Heron.

Some 38 officers and 45 subordinates are involved in the 4 and 5 December uprising. Nine officers are at large, including Captains Bernal and Vallejos, who have been sending proclamations to the media claiming that they are still involved in actions against the government.

Besides those two officers, others who are at large are Lieutenant Mario Ramos and Sub-lieutenants Carlos Emilio Valdes, Marino Puyol, Lukas Gonzalez, Felix Vega, Eladio Romero, and Tomas Herrera.

Some of Policemen Linked to Rebellion Released

PA2512195790 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 25 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] Attorney General Rogelio Cruz yesterday paroled 13 members of the National Police who had been under arrest in various jails since 5 December because of their presumed participation in the coup attempt led by retired Colonel Eduardo Herrera.

Among those favored by the measure announced on Christmas Eve are Lieutenant Zoroel Diaz Herrera, nephew of Roberto Diaz Herrera, former chairman of the Defense Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff. Also listed are Diogenes Cubilla, Porfirio Montenegro, Alexis Gomez, Anibal Santiago Avila, Alexis Diaz, Bernabe Ortega, Irving Vega, and Jose Artunduaga.

Captain Luis Donadio, Armando Arias Gutierrez, Andrevis Guerra, and Ureas Grau were also paroled.

Based on an internal investigation conducted by the National Police, the attorney general had previously ordered the release of 22 other policemen who initially had been linked to Herrera's movement but were later cleared.

The majority of policemen who are still under arrest due to their participation in the 5 December incidents are officers, including Cesar Cordero, Fidel Oro, Tomas Herron, Reynaldo Cedeno, Tomas Valdes, and Carlos Cerezo.

Developments in Labor Dispute With Government

Workers Confederation Communique

PA2112133890 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 16 Dec 90 p A-9

[Communique issued by the Confederation of Workers of the Republic of Panama (CTRP) in Panama City on 10 December]

[Text] Communique to the country:

The CTRP expresses to the entire nation our strongest rejection and condemnation for the criminal acts of persecution and repression carried out by the current government against the leadership and ranks of the labor unions and associations of government employees in the country.

After an increase in the strength and popularity of the workers' struggle for just claims, and in view of the threatening and arrogant attitude of government officials prior to the national strike that was announced more than 15 days in advance, an incident took place on the same day as the strike. The incident weakened the workers movement and swept it off the public stage to make room for the sensationalist escape of a colonel who was, in fact, in the custody of U.S. troops, publicizing a novelesque "military rebellion," and once again justifying a shameful and unconstitutional request for the U.S. occupation forces to intervene.

Reiterating the doubts that the Panamanian people justifiably have about the effectiveness, content, motives, and masterminds of the alleged "rebellion," we express to the country our rejection of the president's intentions to establish an organic relationship between the National Coordinating Board for the Right to Life and the actions of the military officers. We strongly reject this linkage because it is only a political tool to justify the beheading of organizations in the public sector and subsequently in the private sector, and because of disgusting pressures from business sectors that are clearly oligarchic in nature and that have long been conspiring for a return to the semislave-labor relations that existed in the 19th century.

For this reason, we strongly reject the bill with which the government intends to dismiss all workers who exercised

their constitutional right to demonstrate and strike. The bill goes against democratic principles that protect labor unions, as guaranteed in the Constitution; it violates the principle of due process of law and the presumption of innocence until proven guilty, to which every person has a right; it violates fundamental human and labor rights; and it violates, among others, Agreements 87 and 98 ratified by Panama before the International Labor Organization.

We warn the Panamanian people that this stubborn, irrational, and desperate attitude on the part of the executive branch definitively cuts off the possibilities of dialogue with the people's sectors and the workers, and clears the way for a more violent reaction that would only harm the nation and have unforeseeable consequences for society.

The CTRP is a democratic organization that basically rejects any attempt to destroy the country's democratic institutions. Therefore, we will struggle to the very end so that the principles of democracy, justice, and freedom may prevail as norms for national coexistence. We also demand these guarantees in labor relations. For this, we have called not only for the solidarity of our domestic organizations, but also of the international labor movement.

The ORIT-ICFTUO [Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers-International Conference of Free Trade Union Organizations] has already warned the Panamanian Government of the possibility of asking its affiliates throughout the world to demand that their respective governments impose economic and commercial sanctions against Panama if the government insists on imposing its announced fascist measures.

Government leaders: It is not too late for a return to common sense and understanding among Panamanians. The labor movement is also interested in consolidating democracy. It wants, however, a true economic, social, and political democracy, and not a democracy that supposes the country and the government are 100 percent in the hands of evil businessmen and the indigenous oligarchy.

If the government really respects the country's democratic institutions, it should immediately withdraw the repressive bill and order the immediate reinstatemenmt of government and private sector workers who were fired for their participation in the 4 and 5 December labor movements. We exhort the government to start a true process of national cooperation and reconciliation, inspired in social justice and the legitimate interests of national and mass sectors.

Finally, the CTRP urges the unity of all the people and the working classes as the only way to confront the antidemocratic sector. Panama, 10 December 1990, Aniano Pinzon Real, secretary general Guillermo Puga, secretary of defense and legal matters

Archbishop McGrath To Mediate

PA2112030190 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 18 Dec 90 p 1

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] Archbishop Monsignor Marcos Gregorio McGrath yesterday criticized for maintaining a "dangerous" attitude, people who had links with the previous dictatorship and who now want to "bother" the government, as well as sectors identified with the current administration that do not promote peace and reconciliation, but instead seek their own advancement.

McGrath has tacitly accepted his disposition to mediate a dialogue between the government and the labor movement to overcome the situation that emerged between them following the presidential decision to dismiss labor leaders accused of being linked to a coup attempt by Retired Colonel Eduardo Herrera.

The prelate said that the "church's mission is to preach the gospel of peace, understanding, and justice. He revealed that without trying to exert any influence over anyone's position, he has put people in "contact" with each other so they may talk.

This newspaper has learned that Msgr. McGrath took part in a meeting between labor leader Isaac Rodriguez and National Police Director Ebrahim Asvat last week to prevent acts of violence during the march that workers dismissed from the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification carried out yesterday.

The prelate said that the church's position is to seek positive solutions and to reject all violence, because once violence begins "it is difficult to stop it."

According to the archbishop, all positions that can obstruct the understanding the majority of the Panamanians want should be sacrificed because, as it is, the people are "afraid that the situation is going to get worse."

Rodriguez Continues Hunger Strike

PA2412033390 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 21 Dec 90 pp A-1, A-2

[Report by Hermes Sucre Serrano]

[Text] Isaac Rodriguez, referring to the appeal against Law 55 that the workers will present next week, said yesterday: "Due to the lack of sensitivity shown by the government toward the workers, it will now be up to the Supreme Court to prove if justice serves the people or if it serves political party interests."

"The problem is no longer in the hands of the executive or legislative branches. The law was presented, approved, and sanctioned. Now it is the Supreme Court magistrates' turn," Rodriguez reiterated.

Isaac Rodriguez, secretary general of the Union of Workers of the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification (SITIRHE), is presently on a hunger strike begun 17 December with three fellow workers—Luis Merardo, Tomas Segura, and Luis Rico. Rodriguez is the same person who was forced into exile in Spain in 1989 to escape the persecution unleashed against him by deposed General Manuel A. Noriega. The SITIRHE secretary general and more than 300 union members had to take to the streets and ask for help to survive the dictatorship's siege.

A year after the invasion that overthrew Noriega, Isaac Rodriguez believes that the current government has not kept the promises made to the people who elected it at the polls. "They [the government] have not respected the public workers' job stability or bonus payments nor have they kept their promise concerning civil service careers," Rodriguez said from the Don Bosco Basilica, where he is staging his protest.

Referring to his health, the leader said that he is well and has lots of spirit to continue the struggle. "We are struggling; we do not know how long our energy will last," he said.

Rodriguez said that he is receiving much support from labor organizations—both national and international. "We have the solidarity of union, student, professional, and peasant organizations. We and all of them are convinced of what we are doing," he said.

The SITIRHE secretary accused the government of creating a hostile atmosphere against the union leadership in order to reform the labor code and to comply with commitments to international credit organizations. "Obviously, the government is projecting itself in an unpopular way. It only cares about the oligarchy, and this will lead to many struggles," he warned.

Referring to Msgr. McGrath's mediation between the government and the workers, Rodriguez admitted that he trusts the Catholic Church's role, but clarified that "unfortunately rulers have shown their lack of human sensitivity. They could not care less about these problems. Provided their interests are not hurt, they do not care if they harm the working class and the people."

Unionists Call Off March

PA2512001990 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] A march announced for today by unionists has been canceled, labor leader Rolando Miller announced today:

[Begin Miller recording] We held discussions yesterday afternoon and unanimously decided to call off the march to show the maturity that characterizes the working class and that we certainly do not want to jeopardize or further worsen this country's economic problems. We also took the time into account because this is Christmas Eve, which is why we decided to call off the march. [end recording]

The unionists have announced a mass for this afternoon at the Don Bosco Basilica and it is presumed that the seven workers who are staging a hunger strike will announce the suspension of this protest after the conclusion of the religious ceremony that will be officiated over by Monsignor Marcos Gregorio McGrath.

Rodriguez Ends Hunger Strike

PA2512223490 Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish 25 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] It was learned late yesterday that at the request of Archbishop of Panama Monsignor Marcos Gregorio Mc Grath, Isaac Rodriguez, the dismissed leader of the Union of Workers of the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification, has abandoned the hunger strike he had been maintaining at the Don Bosco Church.

Rodriguez was dismissed from his job based on his alleged links with the coup attempt promoted by former Colonel Eduardo Herrera. In addition to Rodriguez, other labor leaders who particiapted in the organization of the 5 December labor strike were also fired.

On 17 December Isaac Rodriguez began his hunger strike, which he continued for eight days without receiving any reply from national government representatives regarding the labor leaders' demands concerning dismissals in the public sector.

The confrontation between the government and labor leaders reached its peak last week when the Legislative Assembly approved Law 55 authorizing the central government to dismiss all public employees who participated in the 4-5 December strike.

The lifting of Isaac Rodriguez' hunger strike puts an end to another episode in the confrontations between the government and labor leaders. The dismissed labor leaders have announced that they will carry out other actions to pressure the government.

New Independent Labor Organization Founded

PA2412001390 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 21 Dec 90 p 40A

[Text] The General Central Organization of Panamanian Workers [Central General de Trabajadores Panamenos—CGTP] has been organized in Panama City. The CGTP is a new independent labor organization that has sprung up after the fall of the dictatorial regime.

The ascent of this organization has taken place within the framework of the CGTP's First Special Congress. Renowned national and international labor leaders, as well as high-ranking government officials, attended the event.

Second Vice President Guillermo Ford, Deputy Presidency Minister Miguel Batista, Deputy Health Minister Carlos Abadia, Deputy Mayor Manuel Burgos, as well as legislators, publicly stated their respect for this flourishing new independent labor organization.

During Second Vice President Ford's address, he stated his respect for independent unions and emphasized that labor and union organizations should maintain their independence and not surrender to any government.

University Issues Statement on Recent Events

PA2312232990 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 20 Dec 90 pp 28, B-12

["Pronouncement" issued by the University of Panama's General Council in Panama City on 18 December]

[Text] The University's General Council, the University of Panama's highest authority, deems it necessary to state the university's position regarding events that have taken place in the country over the past few weeks:

1. We reiterate the historical commitment of this center of higher learning to the struggle to strengthen within Panamanian society truly democratic institutions that represent the will of a majority of our people.

Throughout its existence, the University of Panama has carried out systematic efforts and made sacrifices that favor democratic coexistence and has defended the human, individual, and social rights of Panamanians. On many occasions the University has had to face sectarian interests that have attempted to undermine it to the detriment of the highest ideals of liberty, democracy, social justice, and the sovereignty of the Panamanian nation.

Therefore, we reject the militaristic plans being prepared behind the backs of the country's great majorities. We advocate concerted solutions that are reached when all national sectors are authentically represented as the only way to attain true democracy.

2. We believe that as a result of the grave socioeconomic crisis of the past few years, many problems that have directly and dramatically affected the living conditions of broad national sectors have worsened. This is reflected in the high rate of unemployment, the high cost of living, and the deterioration of basic services in the areas of health, education, housing, transportation, and citizens' security.

Naturally, the accumulation of such problems has resulted in feelings of dissatisfaction, social unrest, protests, and demands for solutions. This critical situation has worsen with the proposal and approval of Law 25 of 1990 which authorizes—even retroactively—the indiscriminate dismissal of government employees supposedly involved in destabilizing actions. The dismissal of several hundreds of state workers, the nonrecognition of the immunity of labor leaders, and the nonobservance of due legal process in those cases creates inevitable social unrest that does not contribute toward the climate of work and tranquillity that all Panamanians want.

We must add that Law 25 ignores international agreements signed by our country, and has been strongly protested by the International Labor Organization (ILO), as well as other labor and human rights organizations.

For all those reasons, we fully agree with the message sent by the Pope in which he fervently urged the Panamanian community to permit policies inspired by social justice and that respect man's dignity to prevail throughout the country.

3. We deplore the decision to request the intervention of U.S. troops to put down a police revolt because it constitutes an action that does damage to our sovereignty and national dignity. It also violates clearly established international legal norms such as the principles of nonintervention and peoples' self-determination.

As a result of that interventionist action, the U.S. President has indicated that U.S. military forces will remain indefinitely within our national territory.

The graveness of those events and the U.S. President's statement seriously endanger the existence of the Panamanian State and our survival as a nation. Therefore, we stress the need for foreign troops to vacate our national territory.

4. The university's autonomy is a democratic achievement attained after the arduous struggle by several generations of university students. Under its protection, intellectual pluralism and the freedom to criticize—essential elements in the existence of the university itself—are possible.

Those who today openly demand the curtailment of that democratic achievement of Mendez Pereira's house [referring to the university's founder] are trying to silence dissident voices and align them with specific political party positions.

Since its creation in 1935, this institution has been characterized by its spirit of solidarity and its commitment to the defense of democracy, social justice, and national sovereignty and independence.

Those exemplary university traditions have inspired in the recent past multiple struggles against abuses of power, which were so common under the military regime. Today they serve as the democratic and patriotic foundations for the social concerns of university students.

Therefore, we reject the ill-intentioned campaigns against the nation's house of culture, which historically has served as a guiding light for the Panamanian people's highest ideals.

5. It is the responsibility of the national government, political parties, business and labor organizations, and the country's most representative religious and civic

groups to seek—through respectful dialogue, positive attitudes, and open-mindedness—the best path to promoting solutions that will make possible genuine national reconstruction amid peace, democracy, social justice, sovereignty, and human solidarity.

The University of Panama expresses its willingness to contribute, through the best of its abilities and its finest efforts, toward the urgent task of reaching a national agreement, as the historical moment demands from all Panamanians.

Issued at the Octavio Mendez Pereira University Campus [in Panama City] on 18 December 1990.

Dr. Abdiel J. Adames, president

Dr. Miguel A. Candanedo, secretary

Civic Crusade Affirms Need for National Dialogue

PA2312131090 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 20 Dec 90 pp 1, A14

[Report by Doris Hubbard-Castillo]

[Text] During a news conference yesterday, the Civic Crusade affirmed the need for a national dialogue. The government, political parties, and labor unions should end their disputes and create a national pact to solve the country's crisis. This request was issued by the Directorate of the Civic Crusade, which was founded in 1987 to unite forces against the former Noriega military regime.

The Civic Crusade points out that the dialogue should be held "especially for those who suffer the most: the poor, the unemployed, and the homeless. They can only hope that the country's productive sectors will unite efforts to achieve true development."

In a document given to the media, the Civic Crusade says, "Invested with the moral authority it gained during the patriotic struggle, the Civic Crusade is trying its best to achieve the unity of the Panamanian people so that they can achieve development in the future."

Referring to the 4 and 5 December events, the Civic Crusade's communique says that the events were staged by "a small group of military officers and civilians and were based on the actions of self-styled leaders who are interested in satisfying their personal goals and are guided by their totalitarian ideas...."

According to the communique, the group of civilan and military officers "once again tried to usurp power through the force of arms. They were clearly trying to return to the practices of corrupt militarism, thereby trampling the needs and principles of the vast majority of our citizens."

Parties Comments on U.S. 'Invasion,' 'Attack'

Democratic Revolutionary Party

PA2212012590 Panama City EL PERIODICO in Spanish 19 Dec 90 p 13

[Paid advertisement issued by the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) in "Panama, Occupied Territory," on 19 December]

[Text] The commemoration of the first anniversary of the bloody U.S. invasion of Panama on 20 December 1989 is an opportune time for the PRD to ponder events since the brutal aggression of which the Panamanian people have been the victims.

The elapsed year constitutes the total negation of the pretexts that served as grounds for the massacre. A government was installed on the bodies of thousands of patriots in the name of democracy, justice, liberty, and respect for human rights. The crime and insanity was described as "Just Cause."

Contrary to the avowed principles, the government—installed at a U.S. military base several hours before the holocaust—is responsible for facilitating the assassination of Panamanian citizens by the troops of the interventionist army, justifying it, and then exonerating these troops from blame. The government has been unable to demand compensation for the dead, the wounded, the homeless, or for the destruction of homes and businesses. Its inability to do so is due in part to its illegality, and partly to the initially disseminated propaganda that we were "liberated" by the genocidal U.S. Army.

Human Rights Violations

On 12 July 1990, our party presented to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights a report on "The Human Rights Situation in Panama." This report accuses the "Panamanian Government, comprised of authorities who were installed after the invasion and the so-called U.S. civilian and military 'controllers' assigned to all public institutions," of massive violations of human rights. Six months after this report, political prisoners still remain in jail, political refugees are still denied safe-conduct, judicial terrorism is used as a means to exert political repression, and massive dismissals for political motives have sharply increased with the approval of Law 25 and the firing of hundreds of union leaders from the public sector.

The Regime Against the People

Attempts to end the student, worker, and opposition organization movements show that the regime does not tolerate dissent. To this end the government has used state terrorism, subjecting most of the population to extrordinary terror and converting the meaning of the word democracy into a hollow and empty expression. The government has not felt the slightest shame in acting

outside the law. The government only quotes the constitution and current laws when this favors them, otherwise the laws are disregarded using the excuse that they are "dictatorship" laws. There are those who justify this lawlessness and even the poverty our people have been subjected to as the price that must be paid to "live in democracy," while those who rule increase their fortunes and the fortunes of their own class using nepotism as an overwhelming way to rob the national coffers.

A Fragile Regime

The regime's loss of credibility, the collapse of its fragile support bases, the virtual rupture of the government alliance, the signs of quarrels between the regime and the U.S. Government, the people's frustration because of unsatisfied expectations and aspirations, and the increase in the struggle by all the sectors for their interests, has led the collaborationist management to do away with its "democratic" speech and present us with a dictatorial oligarchic regime that attempts to show repressive strength and efficiency to recuperate Washington's trust. The latter has already gone to its "hawks" with little discretion to get them to look for a "third force" to replace the inefficient regime they installed.

Submission and Betrayal

The erratic and improvised state police used for our national defense, which is characterized by submission to and the permanent intervention of the U.S. Army and growing privatization of public security, is another mistake of the protected regime. The consequence of this mistake is that we are facing anarchy in society, citizens' insecurity, robberies of stores and banks, attacks on citizens, and constant tension in the Public Forces.

The foreign policy, which is characterized as totally dependent on the dictates of the State Deparatment and not in compliance with the norms of international law, has subjected the country to a growing international isolation whose most tangible manifestation has been Panama's expulsion from the Group of Rio.

The PRD Represents the People

Confronted with the above-mentioned situation, the PRD, as an opposition political organization, aligns itself with the people in the struggle to reach their goals and in the defense of the highest national interests. Consequently, the PRD takes the challenge presented by Omar Torrijos Herrera when he said: "If I fall, pick up the flag, kiss it, and keep going.... by becoming an efficient fighting instrument. [no end quote marks as published] Thus, we take the responsibility of restructuring our party, strengthening our internal unity, and propitiating a strong alliance with all the popular expression sectors.

Halt to State Terrorism

We demand an immediate end to persecution and repression against our people and the opposition; the release of political prisoners; the end of judicial terrorism as a mechanism of political repression; respect for the principle of innocent until proven guilty; respect for legal trial guarantees; the real and effective separation of the three branches of the government; an end to mass dismissals of government employees and the immediate reinstatement of dismissed employees; a repeal of Law 25 guaranteeing labor and maternity leave rights; and freedom of expression by ending the repression of newsmen, the cancellation of radio frequencies, and ending newspaper censorship of expressions contrary to the regime's interests.

The PRD Promotes National Reconciliation

We urge the government to start a national dialogue with the participation of all sectors, without exception, in order to set the basis for a true national understanding, based on respect for human rights and basic guarantees as recommended by the national reconciliation commission.

This national understanding must be based on a true national independence, starting with an end to the occupation of our country and to U.S. interference in our domestic affairs. It must be based on the true and effective respect for existing laws and the Torrijos-Carter Treaties.

We all have the responsibility of contributing to peace and social calm. There is still time to avoid the "Central Americanization" of our country. However, the intolerance and rigid attitude of our rulers are lessening the possibilities of applying political solutions through the proper democratic instruments, the political parties.

If the government wants to prove that it is really interested in the country's peace, tranquility and unity, it must agree to the law on general amnesty. All the politically motivated actions must cease. That is the only way we can prevent the escalating violence that threatens to become an armed insurgency. Our party shares Pope John Paul II's view that in Panama there can be no peace without social justice.

Finally, the PRD honors the memory of the Dignity Battalions, the CODEPADIS [Committees for the Defense of the Fatherland and Dignity], and the Defense Forces, who faced the invader with courage and heroism by hoisting Omar's banner. With his prophetic vision, Omar said, "When the fatherland demands the greatest sacrifices, we do not place conditions."

The PRD declares:

The date 20 December is a day of national mourning. The PRD asks all of its members to participate in acts that will honor our heroes and martyrs.

Paid Ad

People's Party Communique

PA2312042690 Panama City EL PERIODICO in Spanish 19 Dec 90 p 14

["Communique from the People's Party" issued in Panama City on 18 December]

[Text]

The Panamanian nation has not expired!

A year has elapsed since the infamous and treacherous U.S. attack, which submitted our small, peaceful, and weak country to the unmerciful loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of our state institutions, our economy, and objects from our valuable cultural heritage, some of which the undisciplined Yankee troops trampled on as war trophies. All this left a national trauma that has affected the old, young, children, men, women. In other words, everyone.

Why this criminality? Because the United States, in its eagerness to maintain its hold on the world under new world conditions, sees Panamanian territory as a key piece for its new strategy, even though the world trend is in the opposite direction. This trend is toward greater respect for the peoples' self-determination.

However, the Panamanian nation that had formed within that territory kept the United States from usurping the territory. With that fact in hand, the power in the hands of the military served as a pretext to resolve the strategic problem of taking over our territory. War was the quickest way to occupy us and impose on us a government whose origin was an election in which no vote was counted, there was no legitimate announcement, and which was eventually annulled by the ruling authorities. These new rulers were placed in power by the U.S. Government through the bayonets of an invasion, by imperialist design, with the direct support of the Southern Command, and through the military and administrative occupation of U.S. officers and the U.S. Embassy. Gringo tutelage and the occupation of our territory is the end result of the December war.

In view of the foregoing, all that has occurred since 20 December is part of a Yankee plan whose eventual goal is the destruction and breakup of the country in order to take possession of our territory. This is the reason for the intervention, occupation, tutelage, political reactionism, and the antinational and antipopular administration. This is why our people's democratic yearnings and legitimate progress have turned into a great swindle, a great hoax. Even sectors that initially welcomed the intervention feel this way.

Our beloved fatherland has been disgraced by the imperialist occupants and the politicians who back them.

The principal victims of this national tragedy are the workers who have been robbed of their dearest rights and who have been submitted to the most flagrant humiliation and persecution. The aid with which the puppets were bribed to play their roles has been one more mockery to the people's poverty and the national economy, which has not enjoyed the recovery promised by the invasion. The Americans are exerting pressure to reach agreements that would undermine our sovereignty in several broad areas of our nation.

A year after the December attack, our country is in serious danger of disappearing.

This real threat has shown the Panamanian people, the real patriots, regardless of their origin, the tragic truth of the abyss that the American imperialists and their local puppets have pushed us toward. Twelve months after our holocaust, the dilemma we are facing is now in black and white: Either we defend our nation or we disappear.

The people have already made a choice: The people have opted for national defense, and the task now is to organize it. The workers, through their mobilization to defend their rights, have taken up the vanguard of this new national liberation movement. All the people should close ranks around them to expel the usurping Yankees from our land, defeat the tutelage, and lead our country down the true paths of national liberation, democracy for all the people, and social progress.

This struggle demands that Panama receive solidarity from all the democratic forces, the pro-peace movement, and the movement for peace and human rights for all people of the world.

In the end, this enormous task falls upon our shoulders so that we may have a canal for peace and not for war.

Get out of Panama, Yankee occupation forces!

People's Party Central Committee Political Bureau
Panama City, 18 December 1990
Carlos Francisco Changmarin, press department.

Authorities Capture Drug Kingpin in Curundu

PA2412025990 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] The Curundu neighborhood was the scene of an uncommon encounter on the eve of 20 December between the Public Force [FP]—bolstered by the Technical Judicial Police [PTJ]—and the drug cartel that controls the area with the trafficking, sale, and consumption of drugs.

Authorities raided the Curundu neighborhood looking for the criminal Arquimedes Cueto, alias Mede, who is known as the Curundu cartel chief. Cueto has terrorized the community with his illegal activities. The FP ordered the Amarillo building's residents to evacuate the area because they intended to capture Cueto and his associates, who had turned the building into the hub of their illegal operations.

The FP and the PTJ had to use heavy arms and exchanged fire with criminals, who were firing from the

building's top floors, strongly resisting the authorities' advances. The police had to deploy all their forces to confront the felons, who possessed heavy arms. Despite the heavy resistance, Arquimedes Cueto, Curundu cartel chief, and several of his accomplices who joined him in resisting the authorities were captured. Cueto is wanted for several crimes, the most recent committed in league with Crispulo Medina, alias Molina, one of his accomplices. These felons are linked to the recent robbery staged at the Jose R. Zambrano School on Colon Street two weeks ago.

Meanwhile, the Curundu residents who could not abandon the combat area had to remain in a prone position on the street for several hours, waiting for the hostilities to end between the FP and hoodlums from the Curundu cartel.

This afternoon it was unofficially stated that another surprise operation is being prepared before Christmas, and still another before the New Year, to try to end the underworld's control over this community.

Deputy Minister on Increase in Fuel Prices

PA2412204790 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 24 Dec 90 p 28A

[Report by Elkilia Santos]

[Excerpt] Roberto Alfaro, deputy commerce and industries minister, yesterday announced that the increase in petroleum derivative product prices will be in effect as of midnight 2 January.

Alfaro made this statement on the television program "Let Us Find Solutions," hosted by Julio Miller.

Although Deputy Minister Alfaro did not specify by how much prices will increase, he pointed out that it could be between 10-20 percent.

He added that the increase cannot take effect on 1 January because it is a national holiday and the technical personnel will be insufficient to make the corresponding changes at more than 400 gas stations nationwide, but we will try to do so by midnight on 2 January.

Alfaro said that the increase in gasoline and diesel prices will not be that significant and urged the citizens to avoid creating a panic by lining up at gas stations to fill their gasoline tanks since they would only save a few dollars.

He added that beginning next year the government will review crude price increases and decreases every three months in order to pass on their effects to the consumer.

Alfaro said that this measure will ensure that an increase in petroleum prices will not be maintained for two or three years, when the international price of the crude might have decreased.

Moreover, he added, the refinery, government, and distributors will not be authorized to implement further increases on top of an already increased price, because the idea is to pass on to the consumers only the exact price increase.

As for the tax that the government collects for each gallon of gasoline, Alfaro said that it amounts to 90 cents. However, he pointed out that this tax is much higher in other industrialized [as published] countries.

Alfaro said that the government will consider reducing the tax slightly as soon as the treasury manages to collect additional revenues from other sources. [passage omitted]

Argentina

Castro Diaz-Balart Arrives for Visit

Discusses Nuclear Issues

PY2212173090 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 2208 GMT 20 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 20 Dec (DYN)—Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, the Cuban president's son, arrived in Buenos Aires today. During his stay he will meet with National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA) members, with whom he will discuss possibilities for scientific exchange and trade in the nuclear development field.

President Castro's eldest son, who is a noted scientist in Cuba, is scheduled to meet with President Carlos Menem, with whom he will discuss issues related to cooperation in the nuclear field and current bilateral issues. Diplomatic sources have reported that "one of the main issues to be discussed during this meeting will be Cuba's debt with Argentina, which totals over $1 million." This debt is the result of a credit that the Raul Alfonsin administration granted Fidel Castro.

The CNEA has reported that Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart and CNEA Chairman Manuel Mondino visited the Ezeiza nuclear center today. Tomorrow, the Cuban visitor is scheduled to meet with Foreign Ministry officials. On 22 December he will travel to Bariloche where he will visit the INVAP [Applied Research Institute], which belongs to the CNEA. Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, who will depart on 23 December, is visiting Argentina in response to an invitation extended by CNEA Chairman Mondino.

Castro Diaz-Balart is a graduate from a Soviet university specializing in nuclear energy. In Cuba he heads a nuclear organization similar to the CNEA, and he supervises the construction of a nuclear plant in Cienfuegos. President Castro has six children, all from different marriages. Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart is Fidel Castro's eldest son.

Views Shevardnadze Resignation

PY2212180090 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1611 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (TELAM)—Cuban leader Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, son of his country's president, did not attach any "special importance" to the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze because it is his belief that "when an official in any country in the world does not agree with certain policies of his government, he resigns."

Castro made this remark at a news conference he gave today at noon at the Cuban Embassy in Buenos Aires to comment on various plans for bilateral nuclear cooperation.

During his chat with journalists, in which Manuel Mondino, president of the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) participated, Castro admitted that the changes that have occurred in the Eastern countries after the reforms of Soviet perestroyka have caused Cuba's economic structure "to deteriorate," but he said: "Our economy does not depend only on the Soviet Union."

He maintained: "Since we installed the socialist system in Cuba, we have built an economic system based on the Eastern countries, but we also have links with several Latin American countries because from the geographic viewpoint, we are a Western and Latin American country."

He stated that in his country, "we will continue to improve the system with debate and with greater participation by the various social forces, but we will not make any opportunistic changes."

According to Castro, the fourth congress of the Cuban Communist Party, which will be held next year, will have various modifications to the administrative sector as the main points of debate "in order to prevent bureaucracy, make the state more flexible, and improve the main programs, such as health and food."

On the question of nuclear energy, he stated that his visit has the objective of intensifving the exchange of information between the two nations since the signing of an agreement five years ago, and in this regard, he foresees the signing of new agreements.

He said his government has made "a positive evaluation of the development that has been achieved by Argentina in the nuclear sphere," and, as an example, he explained that Cuba built a radio-pharmaceuticals center with Argentine technology.

Mondino said that he was "flattered" by Castro's visit, and he highlighted the work carried out by the CNEA in 1990. He stated that this year there has been a record production of electricity using nuclear methods: 7.3 million megawatts in comparison with the previous record of 6.7 megawatts in 1987. He also said that since 1974, when the Atucha plant was put into operation, 62 million megawatts of electricity have been produced at a total cost of $622 million. He added that using conventional methods (such as liquid fuels like petrol and gas oil), that amount of electricity would have cost $2.4 billion.

Urges Nuclear Energy Exchange

PY2212184490 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1302 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Dec (NA)—Fidel Castro Diaz-Balart, secretary of the Cuban Atomic Energy Commission, has encouraged expansion of the Argentine-Cuban nuclear energy exchange because he said: "We have already achieved what is most important, understanding."

The Cuban nuclear physicist and son of President Fidel Castro, [words indistinct] on 18 December. He met with President Carlos Menem at Government House on 20 December.

During a news conference yesterday at the Cuban Embassy—which was attended by his host, Manuel Mondino, chairman of the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA)—Castro Diaz-Balart praised Argentina's nuclear experience. He said this is "an auspicious time" for the two countries to achieve nuclear development.

During a cordial news conference, the Cuban president's young son, who resembles his father, gave a realistic description of Cuba's political position in relation to recent changes in the socialist world.

Above all, Castro Diaz-Balart defended the "autochthonous development" of socialism on the Caribbean island. He praised the "greater participation and discussion" that now prevails in Cuban society. He openly admitted, however, that "when two Cubans meet, it is usually to argue."

He added that the increase in discussions in Cuba is contributing to eliminating "bureaucratic measures imported from foreign models." Speaking about the changes that are taking place in several socialist countries as they adapt themselves to world changes, he said in Cuba's case, "we will see what actually happens."

Fidel Castro's son said he does not believe in "historic determination"; in other words, that formulas of a new world order must be accepted by all countries. He praised "the great effort Cubans have made to defend their sovereignty and independence."

When asked to make a "political definition" of the current Cuban situation, with a great sense of humor and amid the laughter of journalists, he replied: "What kind of definition do you want, one from Aristotle or perhaps someone else?"

About the eventual withdrawal of Soviet support for Cuba's nuclear and energy policies, Castro admitted that this policy "cannot stand on its own." He explained, however, that Cuba maintains cooperative ties "with all continents" and world-renowned nonsocialist companies like Siemens.

As for Cuba's position on the Tlatelolco treaty, the Cuban scientist said it will participate as an "observer," but it also demands that the agreement "be fulfilled by all its members."

Army Chiefs Name New Commanders

PY2412162890 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1335 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (NA)—The Army General Staff has reported that commanding officers of units that joined the 3 December uprising have been relieved. Meanwhile, five officers and an unspecified number of noncommissioned officers who participated in the uprising are still at large.

This information concerning fugitives from justice was released after a meeting of Army generals on 20 December. It was also reported that 546 officers and noncommissioned officers are under arrest.

According to the newspaper CLARIN, Lieutenant Colonel Autchutz was appointed commander of the Villaguay Tank Regiment in Entre Rios, replacing Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Alberto Alvarado.

Lieutenant Colonel Scortichini was appointed to head the 2d Tank Regiment in Olavarria, and Lieutenant Colonel Baez replaced Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Alfonso as commander of the 6th Tank Regiment in Concordia.

Lieutenant Colonel Evaristo Sanchez will take over the Patricios 1st Infantry Regiment, replacing Colonel Manuel de la Cruz, and Colonel Juan Carlos Alvarado was appointed director of the Cavalry School, replacing Colonel Francisco Paredes.

In all these units, noncommissioned officers had deserted to join the rebels; the NCO's took tanks with them. In the case of the Patricios Regiment, the rebels seized the unit.

Although nothing actually happened at the 6th Regiment in Mercedes, the tanks that escaped from TAMSE [Medium Argentine Tank Factory, State Enterprise) in Boulogne were headed for this unit, and the rebels were reportedly planning to concentrate a great deal of firepower there. Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich, commander of this unit, has also been relieved pending further assignment.

General Mario Candido Diaz, director general of Army personnel, reported that 546 prisoners are being held at the Magdalena Military Prison and Caseros, Sierra Chica, and Olavarria Prisons.

Among the fugitives from justice are Lieutenant Colonel Alfredo di Pasquale, one major, three captains, and several noncomissioned officers.

According to CLARIN, the generals analyzed intelligence reports that indicated that the Painted Faces may still have "residual capacity" to cause some sort of incident. Various regions of the country [not further specified] have been mentioned as the probable sites of these incidents.

Army To Discharge Over 700 Officers, NCO's

PY2612162090 Madrid EFE in English 1740 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, Dec 24 (EFE)—Argentine military leaders will shortly discharge more than 700 officers and noncommisioned officers in a measure designed to restore order to the Army following a military uprising earlier this month, a Buenos Aires newspaper reported Monday [24 December]. The daily AMBITO FINANCIERO said the decision to discharge or retire 57 officers

and 647 noncommisioned officers was "the biggest purge in the Argentine Army for many years."

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting of Army chiefs who said that "excessive tolerance" of insubordination was behind the four uprisings that have taken place since Argentina returned to democratic rule in 1987, the newspaper said.

About 600 soldiers were involved in the unsuccessful December 3 rebellion in which 14 people were killed. President Carlos Menem has said he will grant no pardons if death sentences are passed on retired Col. Mohamed Ali Seineldin and four Army officers accused of leading the revolt.

Government Reportedly Orders Mutiny Charges

PY2512004090 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 24 Dec 90 p 7

[Text] (NA-DYN)—The Armed Forces Supreme Council yesterday received the final testimony of 15 Army officers involved in the December 3 carapintadas [painted faces] uprising.

The questioning was the final step prior to the agreement of the council on a definite sentence for the military rebels.

Meanwhile, a press article yesterday said that the government had ordered Armed Forces Prosecutor General Carlos Dominguez to charge the rebel officers with "mutiny."

The secret instructions were allegedly sent by Defence Minister Humberto Romero one day before cashiered Colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldin presented testimony before the council.

The report, published yesterday by the local daily CLARIN, apparently demonstrates that the government was interested in a quick sentence to appease public fears following the uprising.

As to yesterday's proceedings, the carapintadas arrived at the council premises at the corner of Carlos Pellegrini and Juncal streets amidst strict security measures, and court sources said that several of the accused used some of the considerations in Dominguez' accusation to defend their cases.

Those questioned yesterday included ex-Colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldin, who has accepted full responsibility for the rebellion, Mayor Hugo Abete, who led the carapintadas who took over the Patricios regiment in Palermo, Colonels Luis Baraldini and Oscar Vega and Lieutenant-Colonels Angel Leon, Antonio Perez Cometto and Osvaldo Tevere.

Coast Guard Cashiers, Jails NCO's, Troops

PY2412145090 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1316 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Dec (NA)—The Argentine Defense Ministry has reported that 16 noncommissioned officers and 49 troops of the National Coast Guard who participated in the military uprising on 3 December have been cashiered and are being held at the 16th Penitentiary Unit in Caseros.

Yesterday the Defense Ministry issued a press release stating that "this administrative measure was implemented in keeping with the Coast Guard general law."

The communique added that "these actions are independent from those that may be decided by Federal Judge Miguel Pons," who is investigating the participation of Coast Guard personnel in the military uprising on 3 December.

The following Coast Guard personnel have been cashiered: [no ranks as received]

Santillan, Roberto
Arrejin, Hipolito
Meza, Luis Alberto
Striker, Carlos Ruben
Garcia, Walter Omar
Riquel, Hugo Nicolas
Delgado, Alejandro
Luques, Alfredo Antonio
Velazquez, Gregorio Tomas
Figueroa, Saturnino
Gimenez, Osvaldo Francisco
Ortega, Cristian Felisario
Carbonell, Nestor Omar
Kiewczun, Roque Alberto
Ayala, Victor Omar
Villalba, Miguel Angel
Huerta, Daniel Oscar
Rodriguez Viollaz, Claudio Marc
Balmaceda, Oscar Antonio
Villavicencio, Bernardo Oscar
Ferrero, Fabian Ernesto
Rolon, Juan Carlos
Macalusi, Marcelo Daniel
Danieli, Dario
Mazzeri, Alfredo Anibal
Milo, Juan Carlos
Alderete, Jorge Saul
Solan, Catalino
Aguilera, Juan Ramon
Gonzalez, Guillermo Bernabe
Rondan, Angel Oscar
Sandoval, Carlos Alberto
Caro, Walter
Lorenzo, Arclos Daniel
Sotelo, Argentino Roberto
Amarilla, Claudio Vicente
Escalante, Sergio Mateo
Raymundo, Hector Eduardo

Marini, Carlos Alejandro
Cordoba, Pablo Dante
Romero, Sergio Omar
Sayago, Oscar Osvaldo
Duartez, Sergio Gabriel
Fernandez, Jose Ramon
Haedo, Carlos Alberto
Maldonado, Raul Armando
Gimenez, Zoilo Ramon
Chavez, Gustavo Adolfo
Roman, Hugo
Piris, Daniel Omar
Villa, Oscar Rene
Pereira, Hector Omar
Herrera, Gustavo Ismael
Alcaraz, Carlos Mario
Benitez, Ramon Natalio
Niz, Ceferino
Irigoitia, Daniel Andres
Zamudio, Victor Hugo
Fernandez, Jose Luis
Correa, Hugo Exequiel
Navide, Luis Rodolfo
Padilla, Claudio Marcelo
Barili, Nestor Ramon
Jaquet, Oscar Desiderio
Mario, Carlos Omar

President Menem Returns From Antarctic

PY2512130490 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1208 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 25 Dec (TELAM)—President Carlos Menem, who spent Christmas Eve at the Marambio Base in the Antarctic from where he addressed the nation, returned to Buenos Aires at 0958 [1158 GMT] today.

The chief executive and his small entourage arrived at the military base of Metropolitan Airport aboard the presidential plane that had taken them to the Antarctic.

According to the Government House press office, President Menem went to the Olivos Residence, where he will spend the rest of Christmas Day.

Brazil

German Satellite Discovered off Paraiba State

PY2512012690 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 23 Dec 90 p C 4

[By Joao Pessoa]

[Text] On the morning of 18 December, a satellite belonging to the Oceanography Department of the Koln University Marine Science Institute in Germany fell 10 miles south of Cabedelo Port, near Joao Pessoa, Paraiba State.

The satellite was located on 21 December by skindiver Jair Cesar Miranda, president of the Paraiba Underwater Archaeology Institute, who spent three days searching for the satellite in high seas. Miranda learned about the satellite from fishermen who saw "a ball of fire" at about 0100 or 0200 on 18 December.

Jair Miranda brought up a three-meter antenna when he located the satellite. He said the satellite weighs approximately 800 kg and is 22 meters underwater.

He believes the satellite must have been launched last year. He found some inscriptions on the satellite that say: "This is a sealed satellite with buoy and code number 12254. Whoever finds it please report the code number, where it is located, and its general condition." There is also a telex number (2926190) and a telephone number (432-5973801).

As of 1400 on 22 December, Miranda had not yet brought up the satellite. Aristides Paiva, deputy chief of Paraiba Port, said he is waiting for instructions from the Navy on what to do.

Second Stage of Satellite Launcher Tested

PY2412163890 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 22 Dec 90 p 25

[Text] San Jose Dos Campos—Yesterday the Aerospace Technology Center (CTA) tested the second stage of the Satellite Launcher Vehicle (VLS). The successful test lasted 63 seconds and entailed burning 7,257 kgs of solid fuel loaded into a six-meter-long and one-meter-wide tube attached to a testing facility full of electronic sensors.

VLS Project Chief Jaime Boscov reported that the burn generated 60 atmospheres of pressure inside the tube and a propulsion force of 27 tons. A rocket loaded in a similar way could travel over 1,000 km.

CTA computers registered all test results. Technicians will now verify the quality of the materials used in the test and the operation of the rocket's in-flight altitude control system through the data on the behavior of the tubes that exhaust the gas resulting from the burn.

Next year the CTA will carry out two more tests of the second stage and will test the fourth stage. By the end of 1994, all parts will be integrated into a rocket capable of boosting a 150-kg satellite into orbit 800 km above the earth.

Ultracentrifuges To Raise Uranium Production

PY2412012690 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 18 Dec 90 p 16

[By Roberto Godoy]

[Text] Ipero—Inside the Navy's Aramar Experimental Center in Ipero, in the Sorocaba Region of Sao Paulo, the demonstration plant building conceals a secret: an

impressive line of 550 new high-performance ultracentrifuges that, beginning in March 1991, will help increase the production of three to 20 percent enriched uranium by 10 times. Combined with 48 old units that are in operation, the new centrifuges, which are installed and being tested, comprise a system that will make the country self-sufficient in fuel for research reactors, which supply radioisotopes to 1,700 nuclear medicine clinics.

That is not all. The multiplying effect of private industry's participation in the project undertaken by the Navy's Special Projects Coordinating Office (COPESP) has yielded at least 39 products that are used in 11 different areas of the domestic economy—from the pharmaceutical to the steel-making areas. The expansion of the demonstration plant brings Brazil to the technological development level of Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Germany. By next year, the Ipero Region High Technology Hub [Polo] Foundation will receive the first benefits of this technological development. The foundation will lay down rules for the installation of facilities for the first companies interested in having expertise transferred to them and for the way in which the transfer will be made.

"The advanced materials sector is a priority," affirmed COPESP President Rear Admiral Othon Pinheiro da Silva. In fact, the knowledge gained in the use of carbon fibers and titanium alloys—a spinoff from uranium enrichment technology—is beginning to show up in the air and space industry: The small positioning motor for the first Brazilian satellite built by the Space Activities Institute (INPE) came from the Aramar Experimental Center.

At present, 1,600 people, including 768 engineers and 32 military engineers, work at the Ipero experimental center and the COPESP installation on the campus of Sao Paulo University. COPESP President Rear Admiral Othon Pinheiro da Silva said: "We probably have the best collection of brains in the country." It is a team of young professionals around 35, who are interested in practical objectives. Commander Paulo Afonso da Silva, a nuclear engineer and the main assistant to Rear Admiral Othon Pinheiro da Silva, says of the team: "It is possibly the first Brazilian generation of 'doers,' with a profile like that of the people who began to fill strategic positions in the United States in the 1960's."

The autonomous program was also successful in gaining the confidence of the people of Ipero, who feared the prospect of radioactive contamination. A public relations campaign initiated in 1987 attracted Ipero public school teachers to a course on nuclear literacy that was designed to win the attendees' confidence. Each year, 8,000 people file through the Aramar buildings, laboratories, and warehouses. At the end of the tour, each visitor receives a small bottle containing "Ara-mel," honey produced in the experimental center beehives. "That is a type of safety certificate," explains Rear Admiral Othon Pinheiro da Silva because "bees never produce honey in a polluted environment."

Ultracentrifuges Detailed

PY2412015490 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 18 Dec 90 p 16

[Text] The new ultracentrifuges at the Aramar Experimental Center are probably the fourth generation of uranium-enriching machines built with locally developed technology since 1980. Engineer Paulo Afonso Silva said, "We tried about 30 models." The model that was adopted is a highly sophisticated piece of equipment that is electronically controlled. The magnetic bearings, for instance, require a high degree of precision found only in the navigation systems of space exploration probes that must travel millions of kilometers for years in order to reach a given point with a maximum error margin of centimeters. All the materials, components, and parts of its mechanisms have to meet critical specifications.

The ultracentrifuges spin at 60,000 revolutions per minute, rotating uninterrupted at supersonic speed for at least five years. Since natural uranium (U-238) is not radioactive, it should be "enriched" with one of its radioactive isotopes (U-235); that is, a similar element, although with a lighter, more unstable nucleus. All information on production capacity and methods can be sorted out by the equipment at the Aramar Experimental Center. The enrichment process is performed by introducing gaseous uranium hexafluoride in the ultracentrifuge axis so that the heavier particles, which contain U-238, can spin outwards and leave the energetically "richer" U-235 at the center. To increase the percentage of enrichment, the material is run 1,400 times through a "cascade" of ultracentrifuges that yield a minimum volume of material enriched to three percent.

Development of this type of equipment gives the country the opportunity to gain expertise in strategic areas like superalloys, vacuum pumps, rare earths, composite materials, pharmaceuticals, and magnetic alloys. In all these projects, COPESP [Navy Special Projects Coordinating Office] adopted the basic policy that the project should be 100 percent national technology and implemented in partnership with Brazilian engineering organizations, and that knowledge acquired in this manner should be applied in other areas. Rear Admiral Othon Pinheiro da Silva said: "Our only restriction was that price and quality should always be equal to that on the international market."

There are currently about 160 industries indirectly linked to the program. Another 40 industries are under direct contracts, working on steel, alloys, welding, vacuum technology, synthetic materials, and coiled steel sheets. Interaction with the industries is constantly unfolding. In Ipero, the first Brazilian-made gyroscope is entering its testing stage, which must last more than one year. In addition to its military uses in the navigation system of ships, airplanes, missiles, and torpedoes, a gyroscope also has civilian uses like orientation of offshore oil platforms or the control of inertial boxes in airliners. The gyroscope gives fixed points of reference, a

sort of accurate "north" in relation to certain target coordinates, and allows course corrections.

Pumps and vacuum chambers that came directly from Ipero are being used in packaging foodstuffs. They allow the manufacture of medicine with a much greater degree of purity. All of these projects always begin in the spartan rooms of the COPESP engineers. Dib, Teixeira, and Magalhaes—noms de guerre that safeguard identities that are kept confidential for security reasons—have performed very similar tasks for the Autonomous Nuclear Project [Programa Nuclear Autonomo].

After graduating in their specialties—mechanics, electronics, and chemistry—they were invited to join the team with great possibilities for postgraduate courses. The three of them already have spent time abroad at specialization courses. All of them are about 35 and had to quit their postgraduate thesis work because of their work at COPESP.

Chile

Aylwin, Pinochet Attend Military Ceremony

PY2612022090 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 21 Dec 90 p 16

[Excerpts] Last night President Patricio Aylwin presided over a solemn graduation ceremony for 120 new Army officers in an environment of mutual respect and cordiality, although there was some tension at the beginning due to the recent military event.

Aylwin arrived at the military school at 2100. He was welcomed by General Augusto Pinochet. Aylwin and Pinochet then reviewed the troop of cadets.

The ceremony also was attended by Defense Minister Patricio Rojas, Senate President Gabriel Valdes, Chamber of Deputies President Jose Antonio Viera Gallo, ministers, ambassadors, members of the upper military echelon, and relatives of the graduates. When President Aylwin arrived, he first greeted Mrs. Lucia Hiriart, Pinochet's wife. [passage omitted]

The ceremony concluded with a military parade, after which Pinochet invited President Aylwin and other guests to a reception at the military school.

Aylwin Notes 'Full Support' for Defense Minister

PY2412181890 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Yesterday President Patricio Aylwin expressed his full support for Defense Minister Patricio Rojas, and he commented on the so-called coordinated military exercises conducted 19 December.

[Begin recording] [Aylwin] I believe that all of us Chileans respect the Armed Forces, including the Chilean Army. No one is willing to disparage the integrity or prestige of the Army. All Army members must, however, understand that the investigation conducted by government organizations to clarify certain sensitive situations that may have occurred in the past are simply part of the legitimate processes that must be undertaken in a state of law, and they are not meant to discriminate against any sector of Chilean society.

[Reporter] Will you continue talking with the Army, or do you believe the incident is over?

[Aylwin] I believe the incident is over.

[Reporter] Will the interlocutors be replaced? Will there be new people...?

[Aylwin, interrupting] There is nothing to be negotiated.

[Reporter] Pinochet's resignation?

[Aylwin, interrupting] No member of the government has requested Pinochet's resignation. We have been very clear about that.

[Reporter] There have been many questions about Minister Rojas' part in the incident, mostly...

[Aylwin, interrupting] Ministers can only be appointed by the president of the republic. The president chooses people he trusts for the ministries. I have full confidence in Minister Rojas, and he conveys my ideas very well. [applause; shouts of "bravo, bravo"] [end recording]

Aylwin Assesses Incident With Army

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

PY2412125090 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] President Patricio Aylwin has expressed his wish that peace and understanding will be consolidated in 1991 and that all factors of confrontation and violence among Chileans will disappear.

After being greeted by numerous neighbors, the president delivered an impromptu Christmas message to the people in front of his house.

[Aylwin] "For the country, may the path of understanding and peace—along which considerable progress has been made in 1990—be consolidated next year, may all factors of confrontation and violence among Chileans disappear, and may everyone try to consolidate effective cooperation and solidarity so that we may move forward toward a fatherland in which freedom, justice, and solidarity will become increasingly stronger.

[Unidentified reporter] "What is the government's gift to the Chilean community?

[Aylwin] "The government's gift is the effort that we are making every day to consolidate democracy, to overcome social inequalities, to progress in the resolution of

the problems of the poorer sectors, to develop the economy, and to promote the country's growth and prosperity."

The president, who spent some time with his neighbors, said that the country needs everyone to make concrete gestures of willingness for reconciliation.

The president then referred to the events that happened on 19 December, when the Army performed a security, readiness, and coordination exercise.

[Aylwin] "I believe that beyond the positions of the government and the opposition, Chileans should understand that the restoration and consolidation of democracy involves tension. I believe that the events that happened a few days ago have no justification whatsoever. They show that those responsible do not understand that in democratic life everyone is empowered to freely exercise his rights.

"Any attempt to use force to prevent the investigation of truth, to prevent the branches of government from exercising their full powers, or to prevent the normal development of activities hinders the process of consolidation of democracy and raises obstacles on its path."

Aylwin expressed hope that problems will be overcome and that everyone will understand that the investigation of truth does not seek to smear any institution.

[Aylwin] "I believe that all Chileans respect the military institutions, among them the Chilean Army. There is no intention whatsoever of impairing its integrity or its prestige. The members of the Army should understand, however, that the investigations by state institutions to clarify sensitive situations that may have occurred in the past are simply part of a legitimate process of a state of law and have no discriminatory objective."

These were the remarks by the chief of state, who for the first time referred to the events that caused some uneasiness last week.

Correa Says Pinochet Resignation Never Requested

PY2212150890 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] A severance in relations between the government and the Army is impossible in a state of law, answered Minister Secretary General of Government Enrique Correa when newsmen asked him about the latest events in the country. When he was asked if the defense minister had in some way requested General Augusto Pinochet's resignation, Minister Correa said:

[Begin recording] At no time has the government requested Gen. Augusto Pinochet's resignation. He is constitutionally empowered to remain in the post of Army commander in chief, and we respect the powers constitutionally bestowed on any state institutions. Just as we respect the oversight powers of the Chamber of Deputies and, consequently, respect the investigative work it is conducting into the case of a check made out to the Army commander in chief's son, we will respect the constitutional authority the justice court, comptroller's office, or State Defense Council have in this regard. We respect the constitutional authority of all the organs of the state, and we want them to function normally, exercising their constitutional powers. [end recording]

Referring to the observation by some politicians that the action staged by the Army was a power play, Minister Correa said:

[Begin recording] The government does not like the language of force. It has demonstrated that it can exert its authority and enforce its mandate. Any attempt to use the language of force will not contribute to the normal functioning of the institutions. [end recording]

In conclusion, Minister Enrique Correa stated that the government expects that actions such as those referred to here will not be repeated because they benefit no one—neither the country nor the state nor the Army.

Aylwin Forms National Narcotics Control Council

PY2312015890 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 20 Dec 90

[Text] President Patricio Aylwin has stated that he is handling the struggle against drug trafficking in Chile as a very important and serious issue. Aylwin made this statement during a ceremony at La Moneda Palace to mark the establishment of the National Narcotics Control Council [Consejo Nacional de Control de Estupefacients].

Interior Minister Enrique Krauss referred to the purpose of this new organization at the gathering. Krauss said the council will be in charge of proposing a national policy to the president that will contain the plans and programs to be implemented by each ministry.

La Cutufa Judge Rejects Pinochet Claims on Case

PY2212144690 Madrid EFE in English 0515 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Santiago, Dec 21 (EFE)—A Chilean judge leading the investigation into a financial scandal involving senior military figures Friday [21 December] rejected claims by former dictator Gen Augusto Pinochet that the scam had been conjured up by the press.

"Obviously, (Pinochet) is not unaware" of the so-called La Cutufa organization in which Army officers allegedly engaged in shady financial dealings worth millions of dollars, investigating judge Marcos Libedinsky told press.

"I would not be here now and you would not be asking me questions" if the case had been invented, Libedinsky told press. The La Cutufa scandal broke 15 months ago with revelations that senior Army officers had engaged in shady financial dealings involving speculation in

high-risk stocks and securities worth some $50 million during the military dictatorship of Pinochet.

Libedinsky said he saw no connection between the La Cutufa case and a self-confinement to barracks by Army soldiers on Wednesday. Pinochet ordered an investigation into Army investments in La Cutufa, and as a result four generals were forced to retire, 16 officers were discharged and 150 others received official reprimands.

Communist Party Registered in 12 Regions

PY2312010890 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] According to a resolution published in the official gazette today, the National Electoral Service has accepted the request of the Communist Party of Chile [PCCh], currently in the process of reorganization, to register as a political party in 12 regions of the country. The service refused, however, to register this party in the Ninth Region because the party failed to comply with the minimum membership level for the region. The PCCh has 47,923 members, 20,000 of whom are in the metropolitan area.

Colombia

FARC, ELN Express Willingness for Dialogue

PA2212220690 Paris AFP in Spanish 2043 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Bogota, 22 Dec (AFP)—The hard-hit Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Army of National Liberation (ELN), two leftist guerrilla groups that belong to the self-styled Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board (CNGSM), said Saturday that they are willing to hold a dialogue with the government in order "to seek political solutions to the confrontation in Colombia."

In a message drafted in the mountains somewhere in Colombia that was received by the Bogota media Saturday, the heads of the two rebel groups say: "We are willing to immediately begin the talks proposed by the Chamber of Representatives and to accept visits from members of the International Red Cross."

Ever since the Army launched its most devastating attack ever on the FARC's main camp on 9 December, the rebels have been calling for Red Cross delegates to go to the area of the conflict: the mountains of La Uribe, in the southeastern Meta Department.

In its message, the CNGSM proposes that the first few talks should be held in La Uribe, where the rebels maintained their main operations center until the Army attack.

The rebels justify their proposal by mentioning "the unique situation they are experiencing," a clear reference to the hard blow the Army dealt to their military structure.

After the attack on La Uribe, President Cesar Gaviria said that he has not lost hope that the FARC and the ELN—the only rebel groups that are not participating in his peace plan—will think things over and decide to hold a dialogue with the government.

Government Decrees Higher Minimum Wage

PA2412001090 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Bogota—Beginning 1 January 1991, minimum wage earners will receive 51,720 pesos per month, according to the government decree authorizing a 26.06-percent wage hike. According to Labor Minister Francisco Posada de la Pena, the increase corresponds with government projections to control the 1991 rate of inflation. The labor minister said that relations with the trade unions were unaffected, even though the minimum wage was fixed by decree. He said that the unions will continue their talks with the government with regard to the social pact to ensure that basic product prices do not exceed the inflation rate.

The minimum wage for Colombians has gone from 41,025 pesos per month to 51,720 pesos. This 26.06-percent increase will take effect on 2 January 1991. President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo's government decreed the new minimum wage after the National Labor Council's 72 of hours of debate proved fruitless. Once the Gaviria administration's unilateral decision was known, trade union spokesmen rejected the decree and said that the new rate did not satisfy the needs of the Colombian people. The spokesmen said that inflation is not fought by oppressing the interests of the country's working class.

Labor Minister Francisco Posada de la Pena has reiterated that the 26.06-percent increase is basically intended to offset the price increase for the family's basket of products. In another turn of events, a proposal by (Carlos Gustavo Prosano), president of the Association of Colombian Farmers, SAC, was adopted. He said that the National Labor Council should meet again by the end of January to discuss the social pact. This is the third time the government has set the Colombian minimum wage by decree. At the start of the talks, the workers requested a 31-percent increase, and the economic associations proposed 27 percent. In the end, the government adjusted the figure to 26.06 percent.

Minister Visits Vatican, Signs Agreements

PA2512011790 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Foreign Minister Luis Fernando Jaramillo today returned from Rome, where he agreed with Pope John Paul II to start talks to revise the concordat between Colombia and the Holy See. He also brought news about plans for cooperation with Italy and Spain. Jose Luis Ramirez filed this report:

[Begin recording] [Ramirez] Foreign Minister Jaramillo not only met with Pope John Paul II, but also seized the opportunity of his visit to Europe to finalize two agreements for $3 and $4 billion with Spain and Italy, respectively.

[Jaramillo] We discussed the possibility of signing much broader draft agreements on the drug-trafficking problem. Spain and Italy have signed cooperation agreements with several Latin American countries for considerable sums of money.

[Ramirez] As for the revision of the concordat between Colombia and the Holy See, it was agreed that the respective commissions would begin to operate in January to discuss the points proposed by Colombia.

[Jaramillo] Colombia has asked the Holy See to revise three aspects of the concordat. The first one pertains to the civil effects of Catholic marriages, the second one pertains to religious education, and the third one pertains to the missions that are taking place in Colombia's most remote territories. I hope that we will quickly reach an agreement with the Vatican.

[Ramirez] Jaramillo pointed out that his diplomatic mission also sought to explain to the EC the scope of President Gaviria's new strategy against drug trafficking. The foreign minister said that this policy has enjoyed the support of all European countries and Latin American delegations. [end recording]

Ecuador

Government Defends Meeting With PLO

PA2512183690 Paris AFP in Spanish 1646 GMT 20 Dec 90

[Text] Quito, 20 Dec (AFP)—On Wednesday, 19 December, Acting Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Mario Aleman recalled Ecuador's traditional position on the Middle East. He implicitly rejected recent criticism by the Israeli ambassador because the government of Quito met with a Palestinian delegation.

In a statement to the press, Aleman said that Ecuador recognizes the Palestinian people's right to a sovereign state, just like Israel did. [sentence as received] He added that principles are more important than friendship and that this position must be respected because it does not intend to create enemies.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleman implicitly rejected statements made by Israeli Ambassador to Quito Avi Siton. On 18 December, Siton deplored Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Diego Cordovez's meeting with a Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) delegation. According to the Israeli diplomat, the PLO delegation reportedly had been rejected in other Latin American nations.

Aleman said: "We have a very clear stance regarding the Middle East problem. Our position is based on three points:" The need to recognize the existence of Israel as a sovereign state; the need to grant the same right to Palestine, that is, recognition of Palestine as a sovereign state; and Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied since 1967.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleman said that these three points are part of Ecuador's traditional foreign policy, adding: "Just as we recognize the existence of Israel, we also believe that the Palestinian people have the same right to have an independent and sovereign state."

Aleman asserted that the Palestinian problem must be solved in a peaceful and negotiated manner, and, if possible, through an international agreement in which all interested parties could participate.

In 11 more days, Ecuador will replace Colombia in the UN Security Council, and the PLO delegation's visit to Ecuador intended precisely to explain its position on the Middle East problem, which is being discussed at the United Nations.

After expressing regret over Ecuador's decision to meet with the PLO delegation, the Israeli ambassador harshly criticized PLO President Yasir 'Arafat and compared him to President Saddam Husayn of Iraq, Mu 'ammar al-Qadhdhafi of Libya, and Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania.

New President of Indian Confederation Elected

PA2112174090 Paris AFP in Spanish 1914 GMT 16 Dec 90

[Text] Quito, 16 Dec (AFP)—Indian leader Luis Macas was elected the new president of the Confederation of Indian Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) for a period of two years at the conclusion of the third national Indian congress, held in Guayaquil. The event attracted 1,000 delegates from all over the country.

Macas, one of the few Indian leaders who still dresses in the traditional way and who belongs to the Saraguro Indian group, which inhabits the southernmost part of the Ecuadoran Andes, heads a movement that let its voice be heard in midyear after carrying out a historic, three-day uprising resulting in a direct, high-level dialogue with the government.

In the first resolutions released to the public after their four-day meeting, the Indians agreed to conduct a new uprising if the government fails to fulfill the 16 claims presented at the beginning of the dialogue. The Indians also have threatened to not participate in the 1992 general elections.

The Indians acted cautiously in Guayaquil, since there were various attempts to boycott their meeting being held in a movie theater, where a bomb threat was received. In view of the threats, plainclothes policemen also attended the meeting.

After stating that the government broke the dialogue, Macas rejected all links with communist foreigners and clergymen. He added that "the Indian movement has matured enough to fend for itself without anyone's help."

According to Macas, claims that the Indians are being used or advised by individuals unconnected to their organization are a maneuver by the government and the landowners to discredit the Indian movement.

Macas explained that over 43 percent of Ecuadorans—a little over 4 million people—are Indians who have no delimited zones, and most of them have no land to farm.

Macas defended the work the Indians have done for thousands of years to preserve the Amazonian ecosystem. He also criticized the fact that large pieces of land are being handed over to oil and mining companies, to flower growers, and to breeders of fighting bulls or thoroughbred horses in various parts of the country.

Macas also reported on the lack of agricultural loans for Indians, caused by the requirement that they present properties they do not possess as guarantee for their loans. He announced a series of activities on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors.

Macas said, "There is no true political resolve to fulfill our needs." He added that a single Indian organization is the alternative to combat the poverty that overwhelms the Indian population.

Paraguay

Rodriguez Praises Military Support for Democracy

PY2412211490 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 24 Dec 90 p 12

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] President Andres Rodriguez, as Armed Forces commander in chief, conveyed a message to the Armed Forces. The president expressed his recognition "of the perfect understanding of our civic duties within the nation and the desire to see a great nation for a better future for our children."

President Rodriguez added: "Although freedom and the state of law have opened the way for freedom of expression and the constitutional right to petition, social problems appear everyday, testing our search for a common good with a view to quick, effective social justice."

Rodriguez also said: "The state of law is back, the weak national economy is being balanced with great sacrifice, and the country is recovering its institutional normalization."

He recalled some of his administration's achievements this year and predicted that "the upcoming integration of the Southern Cone's economic potential will benefit our commercial future."

Rodriguez emphasized that these achievements were possible "because the idea of supporting this historic democratic opening, which the people have wanted for so long, prevails in our Armed Forces. Our Armed Forces have shown, more than ever, their high professional training and military discipline. This leads them to an objective participation in the transition process toward political opening, which is the final goal of this process.

In the last paragraph of his message, Rodriguez called for "a high spirit of responsibility to consolidate peace, democracy, and freedom, which were obtained with so much sacrifice, for the better future that our Guarani nation deserves." [passage omitted]

Rodriguez Delivers Christmas Message

PY2512141890 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 25 Dec 90 p 11

[Christmas message delivered by Paraguayan President Andres Rodriguez from his residence in Asuncion on 24 December]

[Text] Fellow countrymen:

On this Christmas Eve, before the Bethlehem nativity scene and with my mind and heart always set on God and the fatherland, I am imbued with an optimistic mood as I deliver this Christmas message to renew the ideals pursued by my government in its task of building a happy future for our nation.

The Paraguayan people today celebrate the glorious day for all Christians and, as we evoke the birth of baby Jesus, we say our prayers of faith and hope as the best offerings of a free, sovereign nation.

Based on the convictions and principles guiding our actions as rulers, we commit ourselves to achieving only one goal: the well-being and development of our country as a whole, of our entire fatherland.

It is encouraging for us to ascertain that we continue to move toward democracy, as we promised. We are aware of the problems the exercise of freedom has caused in our country. Thus, every sector of society should promote unity, tolerance, and joint efforts so that we may all daily contribute to consolidating peace, to making our job productive, and to fulfilling our patriotic aspirations.

We strongly call on everyone to promote coexistence. This is a time for political clearsightedness and for a civilized spirit of agreement. Our hard-won pluralism should not serve to fuel sectarian passions and disagreements, but instead it should make us together lay the bricks for this building we are calling democracy.

There is no reason for any political force to deny its valuable contribution to this national undertaking. All together we will make this historic move toward democracy. Thus, everyone must participate in it. If the government is required to perform a hegemonic role in this

process, it will be only to guarantee the free determination of all citizens and parties.

Thus, it is precisely our main concern to promote the independence of all citizens and parties. Only those who have become used to the advantages stemming from protection and subordination will uselessly attempt to ignore our policy of true respect for the independence of all institutions.

The three branches of government have independently discharged their duties. Their respective members can adequately testify to this new reality. We undoubtedly have to improve the coordination of our tasks. The nation demands an expeditious, effective justice, which should be based only on the true interpretation of the laws and on the rules of equity.

We appreciate and value the dedicated efforts being made to restore confidence in our institutions. Honesty and capability must be the guiding rules for the public sector.

I am pleased to state that the Armed Forces are supporting and faithfully safeguarding this process. It is proper to state that just as yesterday they made a political change possible, today they are the bulwarks of peace and the steady move toward democracy.

A tangible, positive change can be observed in the relations between the state and the Catholic Church. Today, far from instigating prejudice and hostilities against the church's pastoral activities, the holders of political power show understanding and support for its social role. A nation needs spiritual guides. We hope our nation can always count on dedicated apostles who would guide our people through the path of peace, ethics, and national accord.

Human rights and the freedom of expression and organization have, as never before, been respected in every sector of our society. We are showing to the world that it is also possible to exercise freedom in Paraguay.

As was to be expected, the exercise of freedom has brought to the surface some serious, intense underlying problems, especially those of a social nature.

We are aware that we must intensify our efforts to find timely, just solutions. We want to reassert that the democracy we are building assigns a fundamental role to social justice.

We want to contribute to promoting the well-being of our people. We are trying to broaden the scope of equal opportunities and to improve the standard of living of our people by focusing our attention on education, health, housing, and agrarian reform.

We advocate productive relations on the international front. We are now a sovereign counterpart that has earned the right to participate in integration talks.

Along with its sister nations of the Americas, especially with its neighbors, Paraguay is honoring the principle of good neighborliness and is wholeheartedly supporting every effort and action aimed at implementing true integration.

Through lofty understanding and goodwill, our country and its sister nations of the Southern Cone are showing to the Americas their strong desire for integration and cooperation in their quest for finding solutions to their problems and for achieving greater well-being for their peoples.

Fellow countrymen:

A promising future lies ahead of us. It is up to us to fulfill our dream of a prosperous, happy nation. Despite some difficulties and the pessimism of many, the democracy we are building ought to be the beginning of a new historical period for our country. This part of our history should be written with justice, freedom, and the people's participation.

On this night that is so meaningful to our Christian spirit, I would like to convey my warmest greetings to the veterans of the Chaco War, to those who are ill—may God allow them to recover soon—, and to bishops, priests, nuns, and laymen who are sowing love and fraternal feelings. I would also like to extend my best wishes to professors and teachers, to students and businessmen, as well as to public and private employees.

I want to convey my friendly greetings to the members of the Colorado Party, with whom I share the same cause.

I also extend my greetings to those citizens who are members of other political parties.

I greet my comrades of the Armed Forces with a fraternal embrace and wish much happiness to them and to their families.

My wishes of happiness and prosperity also go to the police force. I also convey my wishes of happiness and prosperity to the members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the national government and to their respective peoples.

I also extend my cordial greetings to the makers of public opinion, the journalists, wishing that they will continue to serve the nation by disseminating truthful, objective reports.

I also convey my special greeting to the dedicated Paraguayan women who, with their tender love, encourage us to go through our daily activities and fill our homes with peace and joy.

On this Christmas Eve, I promise God that, faithful to the sacred vow I have made before my people, we will continue to be good Christians to earn the blessings that will make our fatherland a great, prosperous, and happy nation.

Industry Under Secretary on Inflation, Growth

PY2512135690 Asuncion HOY in Spanish
22 Dec 90 p 16

[Text] The Industry and Commerce Ministry issued its year-end message. The message was delivered by Industry Under Secretary Ubaldo Scavone. He did not have anything particularly rosy to say. He pointed out that the economy has slowed, the inflation rate has increased sharply, and exports have dropped. He noted that industrial production also has dropped due to contraband and the restrictive Central Bank policies issued as a consequence of the understanding with the IMF, and that interest rates were deregulated and jumped from 28 percent to 45 percent a year.

Scavone pointed out that our economy was affected by adjustments introduced in neighboring countries, by the Persian Gulf crisis that forced up the prices of oil and byproducts, and by adverse weather that negatively affected agriculture production. These factors, he added, produced a slowing down of the economy, which grew by 3.5 percent during 1990, a sharp drop when compared to last year's growth of six percent.

Scavone said that growth was practically negligible if we deduct our demographic growth, which is nearly 2.7 percent.

Exports also dropped compared to 1989. We exported 5.4 percent less in volume and collected 14.6 percent less income because international prices for our products dropped. Our exports will not surpass $990 million this year, Scavone concluded.

Scavone said that our inflation rate experienced a "considerable increase" and that the growth rate from 28 percent to 45 percent was mainly due to "imported inflation," the oil crisis, and a privatization policy that has lost steam without producing any concrete results or savings that could be used elsewhere in more productive activities. Scavone stressed that the latest government measures to correct the situation have began to yield results and that their effects are seen in the cost-of-living index for the past three months.

Scavone also said that the foreign exchange rate has remained practically stable while internal inflation raised industrial costs, hurting productive activities.

The under secretary said that our national reserves grew by $47 million and now total $650 million, and that the government approved nearly 500 investment projects—mostly in agro-industrial areas—worth $400 million.

Scavone agreed with the 20 December statement by Washington Ashwell [Technical Planning Secretariat executive director]. Washington Ashwell said that there will be no more economic adjustments [referring to the end of the foreign exchange subsidy to public companies] and that from now on the government will concentrate on reactivating the economy, a process that will be accelerated by the implementation of the various credits that the government is negotiating with the Inter-American Development Bank and the IMF in order to help eliminate the productive deficit of the country.

Soviet Official Urges Educational Exchange

PY2512024690 Asuncion HOY in Spanish
21 Dec 90 p 25

[Text] After a meeting with Education Minister Angel R. Seifart, Petr Yakovlev, regional representative for the magazine AMERICA LATINA [Latin America], which is printed and published by the Soviet Union, said: "We think the time has arrived to maintain fluid relations with Paraguay in the educational and research sectors. We are undergoing a reconstruction of political guidelines so we need to restate a series of issues." Yakovlev said that an exchange of information and even professionals will begin during a future stage. "We are willing to admit Paraguayan experts into our Soviet academy," Yakovlev added.

Yakovlev explained that 200 professionals work for the AMERICA LATINA magazine, which is published by an institution bearing the same name. The magazine is edited in Spanish and Russian and is distributed to over 60 countries. He said: "We are also advisers to the Soviet Government, and the institution began its activities over 30 years ago. Thanks to perestroyka, we can improve our relations with Latin American countries."

He said that the talks with Seifart were held in an atmosphere of great friendship, which will help improve cultural and scientific exchange. "There are some theoretical and practical projects, such as one that can be conducted in the Chaco region. Paraguay is not in a position to implement this project by itself; therefore, the Soviet Academy of Sciences will provide the necessary assistance," Yakovlev said.

As for the education sector, Yakovlev said an exchange of Paraguayan and Soviet students is expected to be promoted. "We think this will be a rich experience for everyone."

Asked about the way the USSR could cooperate with Paraguay's educational reform, he said the Soviet Union went through a similar stage of changes and educational reforms, and this experience could be useful in Paraguay. He concluded by saying that "the period for reorganization of the educational sector is delicate; therefore, I think a different experience would help in achieving this task."

German Asks for More Investment Protection

PY2512164490 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish
21 Dec 90 p 9

[By Nestor Desiderio Escobar and Andres Cristaldo]

[Excerpts] Catuete, Canendiyu Department—German Ambassador to Paraguay Heinz Schneppen said yesterday in the presence of President Andres Rodriguez that

"German aid to Paraguay is and will continue to be generous, but we naturally have some expectations." The ambassador said that these "expectations" include "the active consolidation of the democratic opening, a joint effort by the country and its people to improve the social and economic situation, and law and security for all, independent of their nationality, Paraguayan or foreign."

The diplomat made these remarks during the ceremony inaugurating the 66,000-volt Itakyry-Catuete transmission line and a substation in Catuete. President Andres Rodriguez, cabinet ministers, and other departmental and local officials were present. [passage omitted]

"We have placed nearly 35 million Deutsch mark at the disposal of ANDE [National Electric Power Administration] for various projects, and part of that amount was used in this project," the ambassador said.

The ambassador said that all projects need financing and emphasized that "we are willing to offer more aid," adding that German technicians are studying the conditions for financing the electrification of the Chaco region. The ambassador said that only when the studies are finished will we know if such financing is feasible. [passage omitted]

Peru

Fujimori Assails Congress, Issues Union Decree

PY2412171890 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] President Alberto Fujimori today attended a graduation ceremony at the Advanced Military Study Center, CAEM, along with distinguished civilian and military personalities.

President Fujimori spoke and evaluated the first five months of his administration. He referred to the national budget, explaining that it was based on an austerity program. He also criticized the legislative branch because it is not acting consistently with the government's economic policy. We have a report on the speech.

[Begin Fujimori recording] During the five months of our administration, we have identified ourselves with the rights of the people. We established a new direction, new guidelines, and we have made great progress within those guidelines. This has been possible because we did not stop, and we were not afraid of attacks from the opposition, which for years considered themselves the owners of Peru.

The measures adopted by my government have received the support of the majority, and this has encouraged us and convinced us that we are on the right track and that we must stay firm before the demagogic opposition. The opposition is not exercising its right to point out mistakes, omissions, deficiencies, or mismanagement of our administration; what it is doing is manipulating and distorting facts.

Let me now discuss a current issue of national interest: the budget law. The National Congress has just approved the 1991 budget. This budget obviously must be aimed at achieving a balance between income and expenditures. Since there is a shortage of income, we must implement a real austerity policy. [Words indistinct] the government has given clear examples of this policy by restricting expenditures and never resorting to printing money to finance deficits.

We asked the people for sacrifice, understanding, and restrictions in their lives and habits. We received a very positive response that reflects maturity and understanding. We believe that we should all share in this austerity policy. Those who must approve the budget—according to the Consititution—and demand the greatest austerity are the ones who must promote austerity by setting an example. They should demonstrate with their actions that they have enough authority to call for austerity. As president of the republic, I regret that Congress has not been consistent in its preaching of austerity. With this attitude, Congress has forgotten the role it plays as a government branch. [applause]

One of the minorities that obstructs democracy in Peru is the union leaderships. They often use democracy to defend not the workers but the interests of party organizations, which are not necessarily consistent with the interests of the labor class. They are the enemies of democracy within the labor organizations. They are aware that in this manner they can become very powerful minorities capable of destabilizing governments, just as monopolies and oligopolies do in the economic field.

We are not going to allow this minority to try to govern Peru. This is a democracy, and we must all honor democracy. We will not allow economic or union oligarchies from stopping the progress of the country to satisfy their selfish interests. We know that our 23 million countrymen agree with us on this issue. This is why I am announcing the promulgation of a supreme decree that, in strict compliance with Articles 51 and 52 of the Peruvian Constitution and ILO Agreements 87 and 98 on union freedom and protection of the right to unionize, will put an end to the lack of freedom and restore democracy to the workers in terms of their freedom to unionize. [end recording]

Shining Path Raid; Security in Lima Noted

PY2312022290 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1546 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Excerpt] Lima, 21 Dec (EFE)—[Passage omitted] Alleged subversives yesterday threw explosives at the Mortgage Bank office in Tumbez, a town on the Ecuador-Peru border. The explosion completely destroyed the bank office.

According to local police sources in Chilca, in the southern Lima Department, an alleged Shining Path column yesterday raided several farmers' homes, taking

about $62,000 in jewelry and cash. The attackers, who according to eyewitness reports totaled about 20 persons, wore ski masks and carried pistols.

General Adolfo Cuba, National Police director general, has reported that 35,000 soldiers and police officers are guarding Lima and the port of El Callao for the Christmas and New Year festivities. General Cuba requested that all Peruvians cooperate with the police "for moral support." He added that the deployment of security forces is intended to combat both terrorism and common crime.

Air Force, Army To Set Up Dragnet in Huallaga

PY2212181890 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1100 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Air Force and Army troops will again set up an extensive dragnet in Upper Huallaga to fight drug trafficking and terrorism. Clandestine airstrips will be destroyed. Air traffic has been restricted in the area.

It is estimated that about 10 illegal flights leave Upper Huallaga for Colombia every day, transporting basic paste and cocaine hydrochloride for processing and shipping to European and U.S. markets.

Shining Path and MRTA [Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement] terrorists are active in the Upper Huallaga area, where they collect fees from drug traffickers for allowing them to operate and giving them protection. Light planes and any other planes that do not abide by the orders issued by the authorities can be shot down by three Air Force fighters that will participate in the campaign.

Drug trafficking and terrorism analysts believe the dragnet could have been implemented earlier to prevent a subversive attack on police and military units, considering that a few days ago terrorists seized a helicopter during an attack on the oil camp [words indistinct].

Speculation, Hoarding Prompts Free Rice Imports

PY2312024090 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1100 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] The government has authorized free imports of rice and other foodstuffs to thwart speculation by producers and merchants, according to Agriculture Minister Enrique Rossl Link.

[Begin recording] [Rossl] There are no real shortages, but there is considerable speculation and hoarding of staples. I have some statistics in my briefcase that show that there is abundant supply of certain products like potatoes.

[Reporter] Who do you blame for the exaggerated increase in the prices of certain products?

[Rossl] This is the usual outbreak of speculation following an increase in the price of fuels. A lot of rice has been sold from the warehouses over the past few weeks, but the rice is not getting to the people because it is being hoarded. A resolution will be coming out, possibly tomorrow, freeing rice imports up to a certain amount for a given time so private citizens can import rice.

At this point the government does not have enough money to import this product. A few days ago we called for bids to import approximately 70,000 tons of rice.

[Reporter] Where would this rice come from?

[Rossl] I cannot tell you right now. I have not been informed of the contents of the bids or about the source of this rice, but it is bound to come from Asia.

There is also Colombian rice that some importers have promised, and I am sure they are planning to bring it in shortly. [end recording]

Decrees on Purchase of Local Goods Promulgated

PY2412022090 Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Dec 90

[Text] Industry and Commerce Minister Guido Pennnano has announced that the Council of Ministers has signed two decrees. The first decree authorizes state-owned enterprises to make 10 percent of their purchases on the domestic market, and the second decree eliminates the requirement for a minimum percentage of locally made parts for the assembly industry, other than the car assembly sector.

[Begin Pennano recording] It has been resolved that 10 percent of the purchases on the local market by state enterprises and institutions be made from small domestic enterprises. This is very important because it implies a rapid increase in the market for small enterprises that normally have great difficulty selling their products. This increase in both production and market will make it possible for these small enterprises to be reactivated even more.

Another important subject is a mechanism we have approved that eliminates the requirement for minimum percentages of locally made parts for the nonautomotive assembly industry. What I am referring to here? I am referring to industries in the country that assemble liquefiers, vacuum cleaners, and such that were required to assemble their products with a minimum percentage of locally made parts. These percentages, which varied depending on the product, posed the following problem: When the percentages were high, the prices of parts that had to be incorporated were not competitive; that is, these parts made the final product more expensive. So, we are eliminating this requirement with the idea of encouraging competition, and that manufacturers of home appliances and such can select a combination of locally made parts in finished products in order to come up with good prices and quality. [end recording]

Social Security Workers Accept Offers To Resign

PY2212182490 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 19 Dec 90

[Summary] Many social security workers already have accepted the government proposal to provide incentives to those who tender their resignations. At the Peruvian Social Security Institute, over 1,200 workers out of more than 40,000 have already turned in their resignations. The objective is to debureaucratize the Peruvian Social Security Institute. The resignations must be presented before 31 December. The health sector's 12,000 workers have also been included in this system. The incentives will be paid in accordance with years of service and training level.

Uruguay

Lacalle To Meet Southern Cone Presidents

PY2412213090 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1457 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Montevideo, 24 Dec (EFE)—It was reported here today that Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle will meet with Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello, Chilean President Patricio Aylwin, and Paraguayan President Andres Rodriguez in the first months of 1991.

Lacalle and Rodriguez will meet on 4 and 5 January in Punta del Este, which is the main Uruguayan resort. Lacalle and Color will meet in February in the border area of Artigas (Uruguay) and Quara (Brazil). The date for this meeting has not yet been set. Early in March, Lacalle will make an official visit to Chile to meet with his Chilean counterpart, Patricio Aylwin. In May, Lacalle will visit Paraguay and Bolivia. This tour has not yet been confirmed.

Lacalle and his counterparts will analyze the regional integration process, creation of the Southern Cone common market (Mercosur), commercial and economic relations, and other bilateral issues.

Central Bank Announces Foreign Debt Repurchase

PY2312203490 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1943 GMT 19 Dec 90

[Text] Montevideo, 19 Dec (EFE)—The Central Bank today reported that Uruguay will pay $628.2 million to buy 39 percent of the foreign debt contracted with private creditor banks by the public sector. The purchase offer to the creditor banks was made at 44 percent of the subscribed value of the debt, which is the value of the Uruguayan foreign debt on the secondary market in New York.

When the period for creditors to decide on one of the three forms of debt payment offered by Uruguay expired on 18 December, 41 banks had accepted the debt purchase at secondary market values. Another 21 banks had agreed to extend the repayment term for $535 million—nine percent of the Uruguayan public debt—to 30 years at a fixed annual interest rate of 6.75 percent.

The remaining creditors—71 private banks—decided to finance $447 million over a 16-year period, with a seven-year grace period. They also promised to grant Uruguay fresh credits for a total of 20 percent of the negotiated debt.

Thus, Uruguay renegotiated $1.61 billion of its public foreign debt contracted with private banks at high interest rates; this is part of the total $2.466 billion net Uruguayan public debt.

The public sector foreign debt with private creditors had become a heavy burden for the Uruguayan economy, forcing the country to remit abroad one-third of its income from exports, which totalled $1.5 billion in 1989. The Uruguayan net foreign debt is $3.2638 billion, of which $797 million correspond to the private sector. The Uruguayan gross foreign debt totals $6.932 billion, of which $4.320 billion was contracted by the public sector and $2.612 billion was contracted by the private sector.

PCU Communique on Gulf, Panama Invasion

PY2212142690 Montevideo LA HORA POPULAR in Spanish 12 Dec 90 p 4

[Communique issued by the Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU) Central Committee in Montevideo on 9 December 1990]

[Text] 1. As President Bush ends his South American visit, which has aroused protests by anti-imperialists against his economic policy and interventionist practices, another serious event is taking place, an event that violates the sovereignty of a Latin American country.

Less than a year after the invasion of Panama by Yankee troops—an invasion that caused thousands of casualties and huge property damage, destroying entire neighborhoods, with tens of thousands of people affected by the losses—a new North American military aggression is taking place to again crush a general strike by the workers and the Panamanian people's resistance.

This demonstrates that the Endara regime, which was born and inaugurated at a North American military base, stays on thanks to the U.S. Army's occupation bayonets.

Under current circumstances, the Communist Party of Uruguay Central Committee [PCUCC] expresses its full solidarity with the Panamanian people and their struggle for national independence.

2. The PCUCC, along with the Uruguayan people, expresses its strong desire that a bloodless political solution that will spare humanity from human and material losses be found to the Persian Gulf crisis.

With this goal in mind, the PCUCC expresses its support for the peace-seeking initiative being coordinated by former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, Socialist

International President Willy Brandt, and Rajiv Gandhi, the prime minister of India [title as published].

Anything that hinders the use of force and renders violations of international law illegitimate encourages the search for a peaceful solution and dispels the terrible prospect of a war.

Venezuela

Looting Forces Early End to Legislative Sessions

PA2412004390 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2330 GMT 23 Dec 90

[By Liliana Roimo Gallegos]

[Text] Caracas, 23 Dec (EFE)—Several outbreaks of looting at businesses in downtown Caracas have forced businessmen to close their stores and congressmen to close the regular sessions of Congress early on Saturday.

Although the police deny that the looting took place, the authorities did report the arrest of seven persons. Press reports indicated that the looting was promoted by professional agitators in preparation for demonstrations in the streets in January to protest the economic situation.

The alarm about possible looting flooded the city with rumors that revived the anguish of the Caracazo, a spontaneous social explosion in which thousands of businesses were completely looted and hundreds of people died as a result of a military action to restore order. More than a year after the Caracazo, more than 300 people are still trying to determine the whereabouts of their relatives. Some of the people talk about the discovery of the body of a young poet who was executed in his own bed when he reproached the police for mistreating his dog during a raid on his residence.

The press reports today that the promoters of the looting on Saturday used the tactic of faking fights to attract the attention of passers-by, who were then encouraged to take merchandise and flee.

Events similar to those that took place in the capital occurred in the nearby port of La Guaira, north of Caracas, where port workers were robbed when, after a week on strike, they returned to their jobs on Saturday and received their Christmas bonuses.

About 1,500 police reinforcements are helping to guard the capital, which has approximately 5 million inhabitants, while in La Guaira the public forces have been confined to their barracks.

The Congress of the Republic, where legislators have ended their regular sessions, was taken over by the Army, which was there to oversee the evacuation of the building. The congressmen left rapidly, alarmed by the rumor that the public protests would be directed primarily at the Legislative Palace.

Although the macroeconomic results for this year are satisfactory to the administration of President Carlos Andres Perez, who is applying a policy of adjustment agreed upon with the IMF, there is perceptible social discontent because those changes have limited people's purchasing power.

The Confederation of Venezuelan Workers is demanding an across-the-board wage increase by means of a law that covers even people who are paid under collective contracts.

Venezuela's minimum wage is about $100, and almost 60 percent of the work force, estimated at 3 million workers, earns the minimum wage, half of which is used to purchase food items that have increased in price by 125 percent over the past year, even though the general rate of inflation is between 35 and 40 percent.

At the conclusion of the legislative sessions, during which the country's largest budget in history was approved—a budget of $14 billion in this country of 20 million inhabitants—the congressmen approved a wage increase for themselves that will allow them to earn approximately $2,000 per month.

President To Visit Central America, Haiti

PA2512201190 Paris AFP in Spanish 1425 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Caracas, 25 Dec (AFP)—Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez will travel to Guatemala on 14 January to attend the inauguration of whomever is elected president in the second round of elections, it was officially announced in Caracas today. Perez said that he will take advantage of his trip to Guatemala to visit El Salvador and Belize as well.

According to presidential palace sources, Perez also plans to travel to Port- au-Prince on 7 January to attend the inauguration of Father Jean Bertrand Aristide, who won the presidential elections in Haiti.

Guyana

Hoyte Announces Overhaul of Tax System

FL1812145090 Bridgetown CANA in English 1247 GMT 18 Dec 90

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 18, CANA—Guyanese workers earning less than G4,000 [Guyana] dollars a month will be relieved of paying income tax as part of a comprehensive government review of the tax system, President Desmond Hoyte announced. Hoyte, reported by state radio to have made the announcement during a weekend visit to Berbice, said the measure would be included the 1991 budget, to be presented in the National Assembly next month. Berbice, Guyana's second largest county, is situated almost 80 miles from here.

Hoyte reportedly acknowledged that Guyanese workers had suffered a decline in their purchasing power and

explained that the overhaul of the tax system was intended to assist in alleviating such difficulties. The review will also include the removal of an export tax introduced last year.

Hoyte also said the budget would also make provision for public sector nurses, who have been on strike for nearly two months to protest poor pay and working conditions. State radio said the government acknowledged that something had to be done to improve nurses pay and general working conditions.

It noted, however, that the resources required for salary increases and improving their working conditions were not available this year under the government's Economic Recovery Programme [ERP], being monitored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). State radio noted that under the ERP, government had to be very careful about containing the level of expenditure within the boundary of its revenue.

President Hoyte reportedly commended the nurses for the manner in which the nurses had conducted their strike by refusing to yield to pressure to politicise their dispute.

Next month's budget presentation will be the first time in years that it falls within the time limit set by the constitution. Last March 28, Finance Minister Carl Greenidge presented a 12.6 billion dollar budget which saw the Guyana dollar being devalued to 33 to one U.S. dollar. A few months later, Greenidge dropped a bombshell by further devaluing the Guyana dollar to 45 to one U.S. [dollar].

Speculation is rife here that another devaluation will be announced next month. STABROEK NEWS last week speculated that the dollar could slide to 65 to one U.S. [dollar] within the next two weeks as the government seeks to merge the official rate with the runaway parallel market rate which is hovering at 96 to one U.S. [dollar]. The paper quoted an "informed source" as suggesting that the 65 to one devaluation could be followed by further adjustments as government efforts continue to bring the two rates in line by budget day.

Privatization Drive Continues

FL2112161090 Bridgetown CANA in English 1427 GMT 21 Dec 90

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 20, CANA—The Guyana Government, in its drive to shed unprofitable state businesses, has privatised another chunk of the assets of the Guyana Rice Milling and Marketing Authority (GRMMA). According to the state-owned CHRONICLE newspaper, the government and representatives of the Curacao Investment Trust Company Group and Alesie Shopper, also of Curacao, signed an agreement paving the way for the acquisition of the Ruimzight and Wakenaam rice mills operated by the GRMMA.

The Ruimzight mill is located under twenty miles outside the capital, Georgetown, while the second mill is on an island in the Essequibo River.

The privatisation of the two mills follows closely on the heels of the shedding of another GRMMA rice mill to St. Vincent and the Grenadines conglomerate, the East Caribbean Group of Companies (ECGC). The Vincentian group acquired a ten-ton rice mill with 1,000 acres of attached land for nearly 7 million U.S. dollars late last month. An agreement has been put in place there where reliable farmers who supply the mill with rice will be offered 10 per cent of the shares in the new joint venture company.

Suriname

Chronology of Suriname Coup Reportage

Bouterse Said To Resign

PA2312172890 Paris AFP in Spanish 1542 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] Paramaribo, 23 Dec (AFP)—Local journalists today reported here that Desire Bouterse, commander in chief of the Armed Forces and Suriname's strongman, will formally tender his resignation on 24 December.

Bouterse met with President Ramsewak Shankar and Vice President Henck Arron, but details of the meeting were not made available.

Upon his arrival in Paramaribo on the evening of 22 December, Bouterse announced that he was preparing to resign and reproached Shankar for failing to intervene in his favor when Dutch authorities this week did not allow him to meet with the press during stopovers he made at Amsterdam Airport.

"I have no respect whatsover for the way this man defends Suriname's interests," Bouterse said about Shankar.

Local journalists have reported that although Armed Forces spokesmen said that the Army is on a state of alert, Paramaribo was calm today and no unusual movement has been observed on the streets.

Bouterse has headed the Surinamese Army since 1980, when a coup d'etat led him to power for eight years. Bouterse, who is described as his country's strongman, vacated the presidency when Shankar won the 1987 elections, but remained as Armed Forces commander.

Bouterse Resigns 23 Dec

FL2412135990 Bridgetown CANA in English 2006 GMT 23 Dec 90

[Text] Paramaribo, Suriname, Dec 23, CANA—Suriname's Army Commander Desi Bouterse announced his resignation Saturday night, after angrily denouncing President Ramsewak Shankar as a "joker".

The surprise announcement was made on Bouterse's return from a government-sanctioned visit to Ghana to study if Suriname could adopt that West African nation's formula for making peace with rebels. He also visited Switzerland.

Lieutenant Colonel Bouterse, who ruled Suriname for eight years after a 1980 military coup, told reporters he could not function under the leadership of Shankar, who succeeded him in 1988 as head of government and Army commander in chief.

Army Chief-of-Staff Badrisein Sital, also resigned.

The 45-year-old Army commander was reported peeved over Shankar's failure to protest to the Dutch Government after Bouterse was refused a visa to enter The Netherlands, Suriname's former colonial ruler.

Bouterse had wanted to speak with groups which had supported efforts to overthrow his military government, and reported having links with rebels fighting in eastern Suriname.

"I have no respect for the way in which this man (Shankar) has stood up for Suriname's interests," Bouterse told reporters on his return.

The Army was placed on standby after Bouterse's announcement.

Bouterse, reported still popular within the Army, has scheduled a meeting with the Army cadres for Monday morning. Afterward, he is expected to submit his resignation in writing.

Confrontation between the Army and government over formation of a trade union in 1980 had led to the Army's assumption of power.

Soldiers 'Doing Their Duty'

PA2512025790 Paris AFP in Spanish 0208 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Paramaribo, 24 Dec (AFP)—Borger Breeveld, spokesman for the military cabinet, told journalists that the soldiers who took over the Suriname radio station in Paramaribo on Monday night "are only doing their duty, because there have been rumors of alleged sabotage."

The officer said: "We sent only a half-dozen soldiers." He then discounted the alarm caused by the takeover in this second stage of disagreement between civilian authorities and the military.

Commander Desi Bouterse, the country's former strongman, yesterday resigned his post as Armed Forces commander in chief. Bouterse resigned out of dissatisfaction over the Surinamese president's lack of support when the government of the Netherlands refused Bouterse permission to meet with the press during his stopover at Amsterdam.

Breeveld said that a group of noncommissioned officers released a communique on Monday stating that they distrust the civilian government, particularly President Ramsewak Shankar, as a result of the Bouterse case. Breeveld, however, discounted the idea that this could entail or lead to a coup.

After Bouterse and Army Chief Bradessein Sitar, his second in command, resigned, Air Force Chief Ivan Graanogst assumed the office of Armed Forces commander in chief.

Rumors of 'Alleged' Coup

PA2412123990 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1033 GMT 24 Dec 90

[Text] Paramaribo, 24 Dec (DPA)—Insistent rumors about an alleged military coup are circulating in Paramaribo, capital city of Suriname, today.

Television stations in the Netherlands, former colonial power in Suriname, said today that soldiers have been confined to their barracks and that the Army has been placed on maximum alert after Army Commander-in-Chief Desi Bouterse tendered his resignation yesterday, 23 December. Bouterse, who already headed a coup government, resigned after condemning Surinamese President Ramsewak Shankar for not protesting the "humiliation" to which Bouterse was subjected in Amsterdam.

Bouterse landed in the Amsterdam airport several times on his way to Ghana and Switzerland, and the Netherlands authorities prevented him from meeting with the press "for security reasons." A newspaper cited Bouterse as asserting that the president is a "clown," from whom he will not accept another single order.

Emergency Cabinet Session Called

LD2512031190 Hilversum International Service in English 0030 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] In Suriname, troops have occupied the television station in the capital, Parimaribo. The Dutch press agency ANP quotes sources in the city as reporting that no one is being allowed in or out of the building.

An announcement is to be made later today, they say.

The occupation of the television station comes after a statement from the Surinamese Army earlier today that they no longer have any confidence in the government or in President Rameswar Shankar. This is seen as a show of support for Army Commander Desi Bouterse who resigned last weekend.

President Shankar has meanwhile called an emergency session of cabinet.

The interim commander of the Armed Forces, Ivan Graanoogst had earlier emphasized the military would

continue to adhere to the Constitution and he ordered troops to remain disciplined and to prevent the civilian population from panicking.

The capital city of Suriname is reported to be calm.

Army Chief Bouterse stepped down because President Shankar refused to officially protest the actions of the Dutch authorities in the last two weeks.

Dutch customs officials at Amsterdam Airport prevented Mr. Bouterse from speaking with reporters during three recent stopovers on the Army commander's travels to Ghana and Switzerland.

Soldiers Occupy TV Station

PA2512020990 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0040 GMT 25 Oct 90

[Text] The Hague (Netherlands) 24 Dec (EFE)—A group of Surinamese soldiers today took over a Paramaribo television installation and aired their mistrust in the government of this former Dutch colony in South America.

The soldiers who assaulted the building said, interrupting the televised newscast, that they have lost confidence in President Ransewak Shankar's government. The soldiers prevented personnel from entering or leaving the building, the Dutch ANP news agency reported in a news dispatch datelined Paramaribo.

It is not yet known how many soldiers took over the installations and if they intend to issue a communique listing their demands.

On 23 December, Suriname strongman Colonel Desi Bouterese announced his resignation as chief of the Army. He was replaced today by Commander Ivan Graanoogst, who this very same day sent a letter to the parliament underscoring the discrepancies between the officers and Shankar's government.

Bouterese, who had headed the Surinamese Army since the 1980 coup d'etat, upon his return to Paramaribo on 23 December after a trip to Europe, accused Shankar of not having defended him when the Dutch authorities denied Bouterese at various times the authorization to speak to reporters at Amsterdam Airport.

Shankar was elected Surinamese president in elections held in November 1987.

Reason for Coup Given

LD2512041190 Hilversum International Service in English 0330 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Excerpts] In Suriname, the Army has seized power. The announcement was made by the interim Army chief, Ivan Graanoogst, in a statement he read on television. The television station in the capital, Paramaribo, had been occupied by soldiers shortly beforehand. There were no casualties. [passage omitted]

Tonight's statement announcing the coup said it had been carried out because the government was not willing to resign and also was not prepared to hold free and secret elections within 100 days. These demands had been put to the speaker of the Surinamese parliament by Desi Bouterse, the statement said.

The Army says it wants to install a new government within a week, whose main task will be to organize elections within 100 days.

The interim Army chief called on people to remain calm.

Coup Leaders To Call Elections

PA2512041890 Paris AFP in Spanish 0357 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Excerpt] The Hague, 25 Dec (AFP)—The Armed Forces have taken power in Suriname and propose to call elections within 100 days, the new Army commander, Lieutenant Ivan Graanoogst, announced on Monday night in a statement over television reported by the Dutch ANP agency.

"The recent course of events in the country has led the National Army to take political power in the Republic of Suriname as of 2230 on 24 December," Graanoogst said.

"National Army headquarters has decided to install a government next week to take charge of routine affairs. Its main mission will be to organize free elections by secret ballot...within the next 100 days," the lieutenant said. [passage omitted]

Bouterse 'Undoubtedly' Behind Coup

FL2512130090 Hilversum International Service in English 1030 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] In Suriname, the Armed Forces have seized power. It is the second time in 10 years the Army has taken over power in Suriname, a former Dutch colony. According to initial reports, the coup was bloodless and the Army is apparently pledging free elections within 100 days. The Army says it was forced to carry out the coup because the civilian government of President Ramsewak Shankar wasn't prepared to resign. The move follows the resignation of Suriname's military leader Desi Bouterse, who stepped down out of dissatisfaction with the policies of the civilian government.

Radio Netherlands Current Affairs Editor Harry Tenkate has more on the coup.

[Tenkate] As you heard earlier, a military coup has occurred in the former Dutch colony Suriname, in northeastern South America. With me in the studio is Radio Netherland's Victor Hoffkan, head of the Caribbean desk. Victor, what's the latest news?

[Hoffkan] Well, the latest news is that there was a bloodless coup in Suriname which, as a matter of fact, is meant to give the military more power in the politics of the country. The military had been in power from 1980

until 1987. There were free elections in Suriname and during those elections the political (?party) of the Army was heavily defeated by a combination of all civil parties. You may say that during the elections of 1987 the relations between the civil government and the Army have been very, very bad. Only to a combination of recent developments, the Army has said it's now enough, we want to have a new government anyway, we want to have new elections during which maybe we can improve the results in relation to the results of 1987.

[Tenkate] Is the former dictator Desi Bouterse behind this coup?

[Hoffkan] Undoubtedly, undoubtedly. He officially resigned during the weekend but you may say that he is still the man who is leading the Army unofficially.

[Tenkate] As I understand, he resigned as leader of the country's Armed Forces earlier this week.

[Hoffkan] That's right, that's right. But he is of course the most powerful man in the Army and probably in the entire country.

[Tenkate] Is this now a real coup or is it simply a political maneuvering on part of the military in the country?

[Hoffkan] Of course, it is a coup but at the same time a maybe a very intelligent political move in order to give the military more influence that it already has.

[Tenkate] Because constitutionally in Suriname what has now happened is (?allowable). Is that correct?

[Hoffkan] That is not entirely correct. Anyway, the military has a certain role according to the Constitution of Suriname. They have to be out of the (?eyes) of the politics in Suriname.

[Tenkate] So the military has now forced the government to resign in order—in their words, anyway—to hold new elections in the country.

[Hoffkan] They will form their own new provisional government and that government is supposed to hold new elections within a period of 100 days.

[Tenkate] Do you think that will happen?

[Hoffkan] I think it will happen.

Netherlands Suspends Aid

FL2512161690 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1503 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] As a result of the coup d'etat in Suriname in the last few hours, the Netherlands Government decided Tuesday to suspend economic aid to that nation. The coup d'etat in Suriname has brought back the ghost of dictatorships in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It was reported that all communications have been cut in the South American country. This makes it difficult to obtain details about the current situation. The Surinamese Armed Forces responsible for the coup d'etat against the President Ramsewak Shankar government have promised to hold free elections within 100 days. The National Army Command has decided to form within the next few weeks a government that would have to organize those elections as its main goal. This was said by Commander Ivan Graanoogst, the new Surinamese authority.

Paramaribo Radio Reports Coup

FL2512180390 Paramaribo International Service in English 1735 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] The National Army last night at about 1030 seized power. This was announced on radio and television by Army Commander [name indistinct] the Army took this step in the light of its [words indistinct] responsibility and after arrangements [words indistinct]. The arrangement (?confers) the resignation of president, vice president, and the Council of Ministers. [Name indistinct] said it was also agreed upon that within 100 days free and fair elections will be held. After it appeared that the authorities failed to fulfill the agreement, the Army seized power, said [name indistinct]. The member of the military authority [words indistinct] last night by telephone from the [words indistinct] 10 years.

The Army took power for the first time in 1980 and ruled for seven years. As a result of the elections of November 1987, the Front for Democracy and Development, a coalition of three traditional political parties, came into power. A period of [words indistinct] by the Front coalition that [words indistinct] three years was (?characterized) by a worsening social and economic situation and a (?tense) relationship with the Army. [Passage indistinct]

Paramaribo Reported 'Calm'

FL2512181690 Paramaribo International Service in English 1735 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] The member of the military authority [words indistinct] asked President Ramsewak Shankar, Vice President Henck Arron, and members of the Council of Ministers [words indistinct] immediately for instructions. The government authorities were at the Presidential Palace shortly before state power was seized over by the Army. [Name indistinct], who informed them by telephone about the take over, also asked the former top-government officials to (?avoid) activities which could lead the situation get out of hand. Activities in relations to [words indistinct] and the capital is calm. [Passage indistinct]

Army's No-Confidence Motion

FL2512183490 Paramaribo International Service in English 1735 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] Officers of the National Army yesterday morning presented a motion of no-confidence in the Suriname

Government and President Ramsewak Shankar. The motion was presented during a meeting with Army [words indistinct] Army Commander [name indistinct] to be transmitted to Assembly Chairman Jaggernath Lachmon. In the motion, the officers pointed (?friction) [words indistinct] which according to them are an expression of the consequent [words indistinct] attitude [words indistinct].

They accused the government of undermining [words indistinct] of not realizing laws that already have been approved, and of consciously weakening the Army. The officers also criticized [words indistinct] President Ramsewak Shankar who failed to protest against the treatment [words indistinct] Army Commander Desi Bouterse by the Dutch while he was in Holland.

Military further [words indistinct] Shankar of intentionally [words indistinct]. In the motion it is finally stated that the [words indistinct] by Army leader Bouterse to [passage indistinct] all units within the Army made the vote of no-confidence in the government and the president. The motion was handed over to Assembly Chairman Jaggernath Lachmon yesterday afternoon by the (?acting) commander of the National Army [name indistinct].

Telephone Connections 'Closed'

FL2512184190 Paramaribo International Service in English 1735 GMT 25 Dec 90

[Text] The international telephone connections in Suriname have been closed. This in connection with the seizure of power by the National Army which took place last night. Since then [passage indistinct]. It is not yet known when the international telephone lines will be reopened.

Military Spokesman on Coup

LD2612025290 Hilversum International Service in English 0030 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Radio Netherlands Current Affairs Editor Harry Tenkate managed to get through to the Surinamese military headquarters in the capital, Paramaribo, where he reached military spokesman (Roget Brefeld).

[Begin recording] [(Brefeld)] (?Well, I say) this is not really a military coup in the way you used to see it. And that is proven by the fact that you can have [word indistinct] democracy like we had, but ain't nobody in Suriname is protesting against what happened. The streets are calm. The people are easy. The Christmas is going on like it was. [sentence indistinct]

[Tenkate] Can you tell me, is Desi Bouterse, the former Surinamese dictator and the military leader, is he now behind the takeover, is he now ruling the country?

[(Brefeld)] First, he was not the dictator. He always ruled by democratic rules, (?that's one thing). He is not the leader of the country. The country is...ah...in a week we will have a caretaker government.

[Tenkate] Some people have suggested that the National Democratic Party ruled by Desi Bouterse will be the interim government. Is that correct?

[(Brefeld)] There is no democratic party ruled by Mr. Bouterse. The chairman of the democratic party is [name indistinct]. They are not going to take over the government. I told you. Within a week from yesterday, there will be a caretaker government installed, established with the principal mission of preparing and organizing general secret and free elections.

[Tenkate] The Dutch Government has announced that it is dropping all foreign aid to Suriname. How do you think that will affect the country?

[(Brefeld)] It will not affect the country at all, because they [word indistinct] a long time ago. Every time they come up with this thing. [sentence as heard] They said when we would have elections, and when the Front government won, they were supposed to give back the aid, and it didn't come. It's now three years. So every time they come up with this thing, it doesn't affect the country at all.

[Tenkate] One more question: Who is now the leader of the country's armed forces?

[(Brefeld)] The leader of the country's armed forces now is Commander Ivan Graanoogst.

[Tenkate] And if I can also ask you again, what is Mr. Desi Bouterse doing at the moment? Is he involved in any way?

[(Brefeld)] I think he's at home relaxing [words indistinct]. He resigned [words indistinct].

[Tenkate] He resigned as the leader of the military?

[(Brefeld)] He resigned as the leader of the military authority. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Dutch Condemn Coup

FL2612115390 Hilversum International Service in English 1030 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Text] In the former Dutch colony of Suriname, more details are emerging now about the events which led to yesterday's bloodless military coup. Suriname's deposed President Ramsewak Shankar was apparently prepared to make concessions to the Armed Forces but observers say the government's refusal to resign in favor of an interim government led the Army to seize power in the South American country.

The Dutch Government has condemned the coup saying it inflicted a serious blow to democracy in Suriname. The United States has also sharply criticized the military takeover demanding the Armed Forces immediately

restore power to the elected government. The situation in the Surinamese capital Paramaribo is now reported to be calm.

New Leader on Events

PA2612130690 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1202 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Excerpt] Paramaribo, 26 Dec (DPA)—The military coup carried out by Army Commander-in-Chief Ivan Graanoogst in Suriname on 25 December apparently took place without bloodshed.

The situation in the small South American country is normalizing, but the Netherlands Government, the former colonial power, has protested the overthrow of President Ramsewak Shankar. The Netherlands Government also has suspended its economic assistance to Suriname.

On 25 December, through a local television station, Graanoogst announced that he toppled the president because he "failed to keep his promises." Graanoogst said that he would form a new government next week. He added that he will call new general elections within the next 100 days and stated that the deposed ministers "could either leave or stay, according to their wish."

Sources of the Shankar government told the Netherlands news agency ANP that they had not agreed to the military imposing a crisis cabinet before the elections.

Graanoogst was not surprised by the suspension of the Netherlands' economic assistance. He stated that in this way the Surinamese people would learn not to depend on the Netherlands' promises. [passage omitted]

New Leader Rules Out Curfew

PA2612173990 Paris AFP in Spanish 1641 GMT 26 Dec 90

[Text] Paramaribo, 26 Dec (AFP)—In a communique released in Paramaribo today, Air Force Commander Ivan Graanoogst, the commander of the Armed Forces, ruled out the possibility of implementing a curfew in Suriname in the wake of the 24 December military coup.

No outbreaks of public opposition had been reported in Paramaribo by noon today. According to the official news agency SNA, deposed President Ramsewak Shankar is reportedly meeting with Vice President Henck Arron and his ministers, drafting their official resignation.

Shankar and Arron were not elected in direct elections, but by a 51-member parliament at the end of 1987.

In a television address, Graanoogst said that "it will not be necesssary to implement a curfew if the population remains calm." He reiterated that the airport in Paramaribo remains open and urged airlines to "operate normally."

Meanwhile, the police command said that "there is no reason to panic," and announced that it will carry out its activities normally.

On 24 December, Graanoogst headed a coup against the civilian government headed by President Shankar after the resignation of Colonel Desi Bouterse as commander of the Armed Forces.

According to observers, the military, which ruled the former Dutch Guyana between 1980 and 1988, finally lost its patience due to Shankar's indifference toward the discourtesies suffered by Bouterse during his stopovers in the Netherlands, which was the straw that broke the camel's back. Since the coup, Bouterse has not made any public statement. However, journalists in Paramaribo believe that he is reportedly "working in the shadows."

The military authority, which is sort of a supreme security council now headed by Graanoogst, declared its respect for the Constitution and hinted at the possibility of convening the National Assembly to report on the country's situation.